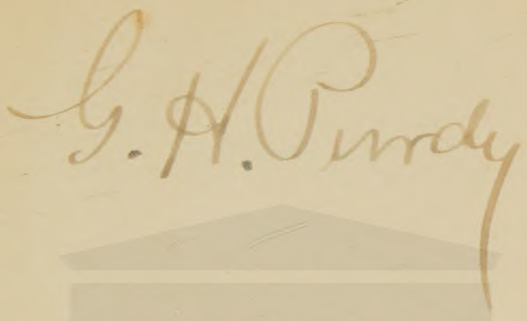
264.03
C83



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/thoughtsonservic0000unse

THOUGHTS

ON

THE SERVICES;

DESIGNED AS

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LITURGY

AND

AN AID TO ITS DEVOUT USE.

BY

RT. REV. A. CLEVELAND COXE, D. D.,

BISHOP OF WESTERN NEW YORK.

"Look upon the city of our solemnities; thine eyes shall see a quiet habitation."—ISAIAH xxxiii. 20.

NINETEENTH AMERICAN EDITION.

PHILADELPHIA

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.

1884

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1860, by
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

TO

THE REV. WM. PAYNE, M.A.

RECTOR OF ST. GEORGE'S, SCHENECTADY,

THESE THOUGHTS ARE DEDICATED AS

A Tribute

OF REGARD FOR HIS WORTH, RESPECT FOR HIS ATTAINMENTS,

AND GRATITUDE FOR HIS EXAMPLE AS A

MINISTER OF CHRIST

A. C. C.

BALTIMORE, 1858.

PREFACE.

This little work was republished in 1850 from the author's contributions to a periodical which originally appeared in 1845. Two American editions have been sold, and it has been republished in England, not only in a handsome volume, but in the form of liberal extracts, in one of Mr. Parker's serial publications, at Oxford. Encouraged by such tokens of approbation, the author has laboured to make this third edition more worthy of general adoption as an auxiliary to Christian education.

Its object is to beget habits of close attention to the Psalms and Lessons, and to their bearing on the subject of each particular service. The young, more especially, need to learn that the Church's arrangement of the Lessons and other portions of Scripture is a commentary of itself, and that *the Word*, thus *fitly spoken*, is, indeed, "like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

The Clergy, by giving emphasis to the characteristic portions of the Lessons and Gospels, often preach CHRIST most powerfully even when there is no Sermon. But nothing can make up for the lack, in the people's hearts, of a genuine relish for each "portion of meat in its season."

The variety with uniformity, which our Church permits, is sometimes illustrated in this book by suggestions as to the public celebration of worship. It is important, the writer supposes, that every Churchman, however strongly he may prefer the precise way they do things in his own parish church, should know of the other ways, and should feel the most liberal spirit of satisfaction with those who do somewhat differently, provided always it be only in the use of that large liberty with which the Church has so wisely chartered her children; and provided nothing more than that, whether on the one side or the other, be sought after, imitated, or desired.

The writer has avoided a dry and technical manner of arranging his comments, believing that a more uniform method of treating the services would become wearisome. What is lost in apparent method, is thus regained in the comparative freshness of each successive page.

In missionary districts, and where families live remote from the privileges of the Church, he trusts the work will meet the wants of heads of families, who act as priests in their own house-

holds. For use in Church, before Service begins; for the closet of invalids, desirous of being present, in spirit, with their fellow-worshippers; for the instruction of children, and as an introduction of the Church's system to strangers, the writer commits it to his beloved brethren of the Household of Faith.

A. C. C.

BALTIMORE, 186(.

The Daily Sacrifice.

Of the Liturgy our Blessed Lord is Himself the great Author. The words of the Lord's Prayer, and those which He used in the Institution of the Eucharist, with other scriptural forms of worship and confession, are its essential parts. The residue is borrowed from Apostolic and Primitive ordinances, or is closely conformed to what we learn of them from Holy Scripture and the most ancient Christian writers.

The word Liturgy is taken from the original Greek of the New Testament, where it may be found in several forms; as, for example, in Acts xiii. 2; Rom. xv. 16; Heb. viii. 2. But, in strict usage, *the Liturgy* means only the service for the celebration of the Holy Communion, which was the ordinary worship of Christians on the first day of the week. The Daily Sacrifice of prayer and praise originated in the Hebrew rites, which the Apostles continued to practise so far as they were consistent with the Gospel, as is evident from their constant observance of the "hours of prayer." For the perpetuation, in substance, of

such Apostolic Institutions we have the express precept of St. Paul:—"Stand fast, and hold the *traditions* which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (2 Thess. ii. 15). And again, "By him let us offer *the sacrifice of praise* to God *continually*, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." Heb. xiii. 15.

Let us reflect, then, that "the disciples came together to break bread," whenever they assembled on the first day of the week. As in the synagogues, they read the Law and the Prophets, on such occasions, mingled with Psalms and Prayers. But in process of time the New Testament Scriptures were given to the Church, and then a portion of the Epistles and a portion of the Gospels were read, as more specially Christian. Thus a division of worship grew up. The Law and the Prophets, with the Psalms, were arranged for a sacrifice of Daily Prayer; while THE LITURGY or Eucharistic sacrifice was provided with its series of Epistles and Gospels. The identical Epistles and Gospels which are now used, as well as the Collects accompanying them, are, for the most part, traceable to the age of primitive antiquity.

But the Prayer-Book, as we have it in our hands, is, in fact, a volume consisting of several books. Thus, the Prayer-Book, properly speaking, ends with the Psalter. For mere convenience of reference and use, the Articles of Religion, the Ordinal and other Episcopal Offices are added. Then comes the Metrical Psalter and the Hymnal;

which are "allowed to be sung," but have no more than a tolerated position in our worship, because they are inferior in style and accuracy of expression to the Prayer-Book, and the Church is unwilling to match "cloth of frieze with cloth of gold." So then, in order to understand the Prayer-Book thoroughly, we must view it as complete, without the Episcopal Offices, and as consisting of three parts: the Liturgy; the Daily Prayer; and the Ritual.

The Liturgy is the Communion Service, with its Collects, Epistles and Gospels. The key-note of all the appointments, for every day, is found in this part of worship. In this Service, also, the Decalogue or Moral Law is read, on every Festival, as part of the Penitential System of the Church, because it is written, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread;" and again, "He that turneth away his ear from hearing *the Law*, even his prayer shall be abomination."

The Daily Prayer, as we have seen, grew naturally out of the Synagogue worship, and its "hours of prayer," which the Apostles continued to observe, in the faith of the Gospel. The Psalter, with the Law and the Prophets, and New Testament Lessons, are accordingly the basis of Christian worship; and on Sundays and holydays, these parts of worship are conformed to the higher solemnities of "the breaking of Bread," which, as with the primitive Faithful, is still the great Service of the Feast.

THE CALENDAR, with its solemn distribution of times and seasons, is a rule of devotions common to the Liturgy and Daily Prayer. Its object is to subordinate the whole of human life, and all time, to the service of GOD: so that no day which shines upon the world shall ever come without its proper service of prayer and praise to GOD.

With the RITUAL, we are not here concerned; but some subordinate parts of worship require a word of explanation.

THE INTROITS are the Psalms which are sung before the Communion-Service begins, and are so called, because they are sung as the priest *enters*, or *goes within*, the rails of the Chancel; for the Common Prayer is properly said, among the People, in the nave of the Church, or at its junction with the Chancel. Such was the primitive way; and even in the City of Rome, there is at this day an ancient Church, that of St. Clement, in which the *ambons* or reading-desks are preserved as a curiosity. The modern Romans have no use for them in their worship. They are in the middle of the Church, as in the Synagogues of the Jews; but in another ancient Church, which retains these desks, they are at the sides of the Chancel, as in English Churches, attesting the primitive character of our worship in the vulgar tongue, and as Common Prayer. To enter the Chancel, for the Eucharistic Sacrifice, was to begin another Service; and hence the Introit was sung as its prelude. Although the Metrical Psalter is commonly

employed in our American Churches, the ordinary Psalter is the more fitting, because the more strictly inspired.

Anthems are sung after the third Collect, in the Church of England, according to the rubric: but, with us, before and after Sermon, at the discretion of the Minister. The Hymnal may be regarded as a collection of Metrical Anthems.

Let us also observe that the Morning Prayer, the Litany, the Holy Communion, and the Evening Prayer, are so many distinct services, and may be used entirely apart, although the law of convenience has forced our congregations generally to celebrate three of them together; and often to use the fourth immediately afterwards. It is only by this common abuse that our worship can be made wearisome. A stranger to the Order of our worship, should be informed of these simple facts, and then invited to open the Prayer-book, where he will observe that its first pages are devoted to the most careful provision for the reading of Holy Scripture, in public and in private. The profuse employment of Scripture, as a feature of this great system, is to be specially remarked. The Psalms are to be read twelve times a year: the Old Testament once, and the New Testament twice; while over and above, there is such an arrangement of special Psalms and Lessons as forces on every mind, without a word of comment, the harmony of all the parts of Scripture, and the true law of its interpretation. The Prayer-book, then, is but

an humble handmaid of the Scriptures, which nobody can use, as is designed, without becoming thoroughly versed in the Word of God.

First of all, we have directions for reading, or singing, the Psalms of David. These are the inspired foundation of social worship; and with the Lord's Prayer, and the Lessons, are a complete formulary of devotion, in the very words of the Holy Ghost, and of Jesus Christ. It is clear, therefore, that we have the Prayer-book in the Bible; and nothing is added which is not, virtually, from the same source.

The Psalter is an old translation of the Psalms; much older than that in the English Bible, and is better adapted for devotional uses. Those who are acquainted with other languages than their own, know how common is the difficulty of fully expressing a single word in one tongue by any single word in another. The value of these two versions, in bringing out the full sense of the Psalms, is, therefore, very great, and we ought to be familiar with each.

The Psalms were inspired to be chanted, in public worship. This is evident in the Bible version of Psalms, which retains the musical directions. Rhymed hymns and psalms, it must be remembered, were unknown to the Apostles, and chanting was the only singing they taught the Church.

For technical use and convenience, each Psalm is distinguished by its old Latin name; with which appropriate chants, or tunes, are still associated.

Although the Psalter is conveniently set at the end of the book, it must be regarded as, in fact, the first thing contained in it; seeing that the directions for its use are the actual beginning.

And here we are to note that special Psalms are appointed for certain days: we have six Penitential Psalms for Ash-Wednesday, and divers Messianic Psalms (those which relate directly to CHRIST) distributed among the appropriate festivals. By this little table, then, one can always pick out the Psalms for special subjects of meditation: ever remembering that Psalm *fifty-first* is the Great Penitential, and must be added to these six minor ones, to complete the seven.

Next we have the table of Lessons, arranged by the Calendar. First come the special Lessons, for Sundays and Holy days; and then the tables for daily Lessons, for every day in the year. Turning to January first, we observe a blank in the table, which indicates that we must look to the special table, and find the Lessons for the Circumcision. On the second of January, in the morning, begins the first chapter of Genesis, and the first chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel: and in the evening, after the second of Genesis, we begin the Epistles. And so we go through the year: no day that ever comes being without its special provision from the oracles of GOD. In the history of the Church, and of individuals, the coincidences of these oracles with special occasions have often been noted.

Thus, when the seven bishops were sent to prison, for resisting the Popish projects of James the Second, they read the Evening Prayer together, and were much consoled to find the Second Lesson to be II. Corinthians, chapter sixth, which from the second verse to the tenth, seemed a message to them from God himself: while from the sixteenth verse to the end, it seemed to be a divine testimony to the fidelity of the Church of England, in her happy Reformation. Let it never be forgotten that this Reformation did not construct a new Church, but merely restored the ancient Church of the realm to its primitive freedom and purity.

The Christian Year of the Church, is not properly estimated as a means of grace, even by ourselves. For supposing it had never been invented nor thought of before, and supposing it had just entered into the mind of some modern sectary to establish a system, like that of the Church, for insuring a full display of CHRIST, and a thorough exploring of the Scriptures, every year. How brilliant the thought! How Scriptural the conception! How Evangelical, how richly spiritual, how blessed, the practical plan! Such would be the universal expression of popular piety: and the author of this great method would be regarded as the man of the times; the grand original of a new and progressive form of Christianity; a Luther or a Wesley. And justly so; for it may be safely said that no one of those leaders of the popular

mind who has left a sect to perpetuate his name and teaching, has embodied in it any thing which is one-thousandth part so substantial, and positive, as this truly Christian system of Scriptural Exposition. Of the sects, one perhaps exists on some merely negative basis, because it denies something which another sect maintains: while another takes up some single idea, and on this meagre foundation rears its claim to be a Christian Church. But look at this majestic system of claiming all time for JESUS CHRIST, and filling every day in every year with His Name, and His Worship! See how vast and rich the scheme, as a token of, and a provision for, the Second Advent! And then, see what may be said of its divine origin! In the following pages it is proved that GOD is the real author of this scheme, and that it is revealed, in its substance, as part of His Wisdom, for perpetuating His Truth. Were it therefore the peculiarity of a sect, and as such were it maintained and propagated, I do not hesitate to affirm that no existing Christian sect has half so broad a ground to stand upon, or urges so clear and conclusive an apology for its existence, as that sect could demonstrate, and claim as its own. And yet, because all this is but part of our inestimable inheritance as Churchmen, we hardly think of it as, even on popular grounds, a conclusive reason for being what we are, and as furnishing an irresistible argument against those who oppose themselves. Of course we are Churchmen on higher

grounds, and for independent reasons: yet it is a fact that the mind of our countrymen is too much perverted and prejudiced to appreciate these higher principles. We can hardly refer to them without wounding their feelings, and exciting their antagonism. But might we not safely and charitably direct their attention to our Liturgic System, first of all, as something which they ought to examine; and then leave them to their own conclusions, when once they shall have discovered that this inestimable possession is only to be found in its completeness among those who have preserved all the other Apostolic institutions of the Gospel in their purity and integrity? The orderly reading of the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue is an essential part of this primitive system, as also is responsive prayer, and GOD has made it the distinction of the Anglican Church, in divers parts of the world, to be almost the only witness for that system of His worship, in the great Congregation, which the Holy Scriptures show to have originated with the Divine Wisdom; and which is plainly the plan and principle of public service which the New Testament everywhere implies and presupposes.

The disciples of John the Baptist, although they were pious Israelites, were awakened by the deeper insight which he gave them of spiritual things, to new views of the dignity and importance of prayer. He therefore taught them new forms. Our Blessed SAVIOUR did the same when

His own disciples came to Him, with a like view of their incompetency, saying, "LORD, teach us to pray." They had worthy apprehensions of the character of GOD, and humble ideas of themselves, and they felt profoundly that they "knew not what they should pray for as they ought." It is certain that similar convictions are not characteristic of the men of our times.

But "the Spirit helpeth our infirmities." The worship of GOD in the order and method of a service of prayers and thanksgivings, prepared beforehand, by competent authority, has its origin in no human foresight. In the inspired Psalms, which are a collection of prayers for Liturgical use, we have found the warrant for such a system. In the arrangements of the worship of the Temple and Synagogue, as divinely constituted, or approved by GOD when instituted by His servants, we have the assurance that such worship is acceptable to the Most High. In the fact that our Blessed SAVIOUR, and His Apostles, scrupulously observed this worship, we have its further warrant. In the fact that John Baptist gave his disciples a form of prayer; and that our LORD Himself set forth a form, to be used by all Christians, we are assured that, like instrumental and vocal music, such forms were no part of the ceremonial Law which the Gospel abolished. Further, in the Apostolic use of Psalms and Hymns, and the responsive nature of the Apostolic worship, with its characteristic lifting up of the voices of all "with one

accord," we have the sufficient evidence of the Evangelical character of such worship. Finally, in the Apocalypse we have a glimpse of the worship of heaven; and we find it a responsive and Liturgical worship, like that of the Church on earth, but infinitely more sublime. The historical fact that the Church has always used a Liturgy, and that no period can be mentioned when such was not the worship of Apostolic Christendom, may be added to sustain the use of our own Liturgy, under the Apostle's rule,—for such is its literal rendering,—"Let all things be done *decorously* and according to—*set usage.*"

Whenever, in the course of the following pages, the Catholic worship, or Catholic usages, are mentioned, the reader will understand, therefore, that this primitive Christian system is referred to. The corrupt system of the Romish Church originated in the middle ages. That of our own Communion is Catholic, because it existed before the Papacy arose to divide and defile that Holy Catholic Church, of which we make mention in the Creed. Let us ever remember that a true Church of CHRIST exists in its historical identity, wherever a Christian flock lives in Communion with a Christian Bishop, who derives his authority from the Apostles, and professes all the articles of the Christian Faith, as contained in the primitive Creeds. The aggregate of such Churches is the Holy Catholic Church, and its unity consists in the unity of their origin and of

their faith. But some of these Churches have added to the faith, and, like Sardis and Thyatira of old, are so corrupt, that it is perilous to the soul even to live in communion with them. It is the blessed privilege of the Anglican Christian to belong to a portion of the Catholic Church which holds neither more nor less than the Christian faith, as professed in the purest ages and by the purest Churches. In proof of this, she alone of all the Churches fearlessly appeals to the earliest Christian records, and (what is more important still) she alone as fearlessly opens the HOLY SCRIPTURES to all her children, and submits all she does and teaches to that test, "commending herself to every man's conscience in the fear of GOD." In point of fact, her Services are, substantially, the most ancient now in use in Christendom. She is the Church of the Nicene Age, restored. Such as the Church was then, in the days of martyrs, such is our own Church now. So then, while she has yet much to do, in strengthening the things that remain, we may venture to believe that she is, in these latter days, what Philadelphia was among the seven Churches of Asia, in the days of St. John. As such, GOD is wonderfully enlarging her in all the earth, and by restoring in her the primitive pattern, just as it was in danger of being wholly lost, He seems to have signally fulfilled in her the promise concerning the Apostolic Church, which is builded on the ROCK CHRIST JESUS,—that "the gates of hell shall never prevail against it."

Monitions.

PREPARE for divine service in your closet, and at your toilet. It is a sign of ill-breeding, as well as of frivolity, to dress elaborately for Church.

It is well to be early at Church, if the time before service be devoutly employed in the use of the Prayer-book, or Bible, or in pious meditation.

Do not be afraid of making your devotions too long, when you first bow your head, on entering.

And remember that if you come late you should not disturb the worship of others, by going to your usual seat, until there is some change in the service,—especially if the congregation is kneeling.

Instead of staring about, or listlessly lolling in your seat, after the usual devotions on coming in, you should read over the Psalter, or some other portion of Scripture, as suited to direct your thoughts in the House of Prayer, and as the best stimulant to the enjoyment of the public Service.

It is the house of GOD: why should you throw away one minute within its sacred walls, and at the very gate of Heaven? It is the Court of the great King, who expects us to wait on Him, in His temple. Why should

you forget that you are in His immediate presence, and have come to do Him homage?

If you have time, use the Collects in the Institution Office for the minister and the congregation, your brethren and fellow-worshippers.

Find the Psalms for the day; look them over; and also the Epistle and Gospel, and suit your ejaculations to the subject, the season, or the festival.

Look over your baptismal vows; your confirmation promises; and use proper ejaculations, beseeching GOD for grace to keep them.

If you have *God-children*, now is the time to pray for them, or for your own children, or for both together.

If you have particular sins to repent of, confess them: and use the Ash-Wednesday confessions, or the 51st Psalm, as preparatory to the General Confession and the Absolution in the Service.

If you have received peculiar mercies, thank GOD for them: and use the 63d Psalm, or some other Psalm of Thanksgiving.

If peculiar afflictions, use the seven Penitential Psalms, or any Prayers appropriate.

Or make use of the Collects successively; as reminding you of past and future Services, and as being very comprehensive.

Or, if you choose, *commune with your own heart, and be still;* and, like the publican, smite your breast, saying, GOD *be merciful to me, a sinner!*

On great Festivals—meditate on the events you commemorate, and ask GOD to show you the wondrous things of His Law concerning them.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; and be sure, if

God should not give her immediate prosperity, they at least shall prosper who love her.

Join fervently, and audibly, in the responses. You serve God by assisting and encouraging others in this way. But be careful not to pitch your voice so as to create a discord and make yourself conspicuous.

In singing, observe the same rule. God has a right to the use of your tongue, which he made to sing His praise, as angels do. Remember, it is "the best member that you have," and yet it is often abused to offend God. Use it in asking forgiveness, and in magnifying His mercy.

Good manners are bred of the Gospel. Be considerate in the house of God, especially to poor persons. Give them room, for Christ's sake. Charity is better than burnt-offerings. And remember, Jesus Christ was poor. He became so for our sakes, though He was infinitely rich!

Even though you be a prince, then, you will act becomingly if you show yourself willing to kneel down at the side of a beggar. Human distinctions are for courts and drawing-rooms: in the house of God, all are worms of the dust together, as in the grave, or at the bar of final Judgment.

Should you enter the Church after the service is begun, remain near the door till some change in the solemnities, but do not fail to join in the worship, nor to take a devout attitude.

And, finally, why should you ever pass by an open Church, without entering it, and doing as did the publican? On weekdays,—in strange cities,—anywhere

where God's holy house invites you in,—why not offer a prayer, and go on your way rejoicing?

On entering an empty church at any time, say, devoutly, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

Before leaving, say the 54th Psalm, and add, reverently, "For my brethren and companions' sakes I will wish thee prosperity: Peace be within thy walls."

Before divine service, say, as you kneel, in your accustomed place, "Holy Spirit of God, be with me in the solemn sacrifice of prayer and praise, and keep me from vain thoughts and roving eyes, and from the Evil One. Be with thy minister in prayer and preaching, and give all the congregation ears to hear, and understanding hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

COMMON PRAYER.

The Morning Prayer.

This Service, which is called *Matins* in the old books, is thereby more significantly allotted to an early hour for its celebration. Accordingly, we begin the day with four kinds of worship, here reduced to one Order of Prayer. First, we have the Penitential Office of the morning; then the Doxologies; then the Lessons and Creeds; and then the Collects and Prayers.

1. The Sentences, and what follows them, down to the Lord's Prayer, are a Penitential Preface to the rest of this Service. In the first English Prayer-book it is not found; but it was afterwards added, as part of the Penitential system, established by the Reformers, in place of the effete mediæval system, which they could no longer retain with fidelity to Christ and His ordinances.

2. With the Lord's Prayer, which is the language of loving children, begins that strain of elevated devotion, which is carried on in the

Psalms, intermingled with *Hallelujahs* and *Glorias*, until the Lessons introduce a new portion of the Service. As the *Doxology* is a marked characteristic of this division of Public Worship, and as the spirit of praise and adoration runs through it, it may well take its name accordingly.

3. The *Symbols*, or Creeds, give significance to the next stage in the Service, because the confession of a true faith is the great end for which the Lessons are read in our hearing. In the Lessons the SPIRIT speaks, and in the Creed the Bride lifts up her responsive voice. The place of the hymn *Te Deum*, which is a symbolical hymn, accords entirely with this plan; nor is there any thing really exceptional in the place of the *Benedicite*, and of the Psalm and hymn which follow the Second Lesson.

4. After witnessing a good confession, all kneel down for united and continuous prayer, chiefly in the form of *Collects*,—an ancient name for a very ancient sort of petition, in which the Minister *collects* the words and desires of many hearts, or, more probably, what may be conceived of as the *spirit* and *sum* of foregoing devotions and Lessons.

Keeping in mind these distinct parts or divisions of the Service, observe that, with the exception of the first three, the opening sentences are all of a penitential character. Some are specially suited to Advent, and others to Lent and Holy Week, but all are of a penitential tone; the

only exceptions having been prefixed to be used on festivals, or, in connection with one or two of the others, merely as impressive introductions to Public Worship.

Next, the congregation is exhorted to the General Confession. We come before God as sinners; and hence our first duty is to take our place in the dust, at his footstool.

The Confession is now made by all, with one accord, in words which the Minister first pronounces aloud, leading the congregation. There should be no hurrying in this solemn part of the worship; for it presupposes a collected state of mind, and that the worshipper knows and feels the burden which he thus casts on the Lord.

Then the Minister (if he be a Bishop or a Priest) rises from his knees and pronounces the Absolution, in the name of CHRIST. Received in faith, it is a great comfort and assurance to the soul of the believer; for whereas by his confession he has pronounced himself in the position of one who has broken the Baptismal Covenant, so Christ, on his part, assures him hereby of complete restoration to Baptismal privileges, if he be truly penitent. The Covenant of Remission is made in Baptism, and this is merely renewed by Absolution. For, as Baptism can never be repeated, a fresh token and pledge of that "Everlasting Covenant," which nothing but unrepented sin can annul, is a sweet consolation to a burdened conscience. The words of our Lord, "whosoever sins

ye remit," etc., have primary reference to the administration of the Sacraments; but the Scriptural warrant for such a benediction as is here pronounced, is included in the power to admit to the Sacraments and to refuse them. Of Absolution, as a Sacrament in itself, there is no trace in Holy Scripture; but, as the power of excommunication must of necessity exist, (Titus iii. 10,) so, a like power of admission to all the means of grace in connection with the Church cannot be denied. It is, in all respects, similar to the language of the Apostle, "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." Let the penitent say *Amen*, meaning thereby to say, "Even so, Lord: be it unto me according to thy word." And here observe that the worshipper is not to repeat after the Minister, where it is simply provided that he should respond in this way. For such responses we have the testimony of Scripture, (I. Cor. xiv. 16,) in a passage which seems to refer to an Absolution as "blessing with the Spirit." So, then, we have newly received "the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, *Abba*, Father;" and now we are ready for the children's bread. This is the place for saying, *Our Father*, therefore; and we do so, as set free from sin and admitted to "the glorious liberty of the sons of God." Let us reflect that the petition, *Deliver us from evil*, means deliverance from the Evil One. When we utter the Doxology, *Thine is the kingdom*, we begin to praise God. But, before rising to carry on this delightful

part of worship, we utter the Psalmist's Prayer, *O Lord, open thou our lips.* Then, all standing up, we repeat the *Gloria Patri*, which is followed by the *Hallelujah;* for this Hebrew form is merely translated and paraphrased in the versicle, *Praise ye the Lord*, and its response, *The Lord's name be praised.* The portion of Psalms for the day is now introduced by the *Invitatory*, (*O come let us sing*, etc.,) which by its very words suggests that it was inspired of God to be so used. After this we turn to the Psalter. And although we only *read* the Psalms in ordinary worship, we must remember that they were designed by inspiration to be chanted, and that we only partially comply with their design when we sing the metrical Psalms The popular views on this matter are clearly wrong; and a visit to any Jewish synagogue will give one a more just idea of what the Apostles established, and what they meant by "*speaking to yourselves* in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." A much better idea in every way of the Apostolic worship would be derived from our own Service, were our people trained to take up the Psalter "with one accord," and to lift up their voices in chanting it, antiphonally. Suffice it, the provision is made, though we may not be able to enjoy it; and a heart rightfully tuned will not fail to make a melody acceptable to God, even in reading these inspired strains of praise and prayer.

With these Psalms are intermingled repeated Doxologies to the Holy Trinity, and at the close

the *Gloria in Excelsis* is sometimes sung. In this way the Hebrew Psalter is harmonized with Christian worship, and the God of Jews and Gentiles is acknowledged as the one great I AM, the mysterious Trinity. Special Psalms are appointed for special days, and Selections of Psalms for exceptional cases.

The Lessons are read next, the one from the Old Testament, and the other from the New. And thus Christ is preached, even if there be no sermon, just as Moses was preached in the synagogue. For it is written, "Moses of old time hath in every city them that *preach him*, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day." (Acts xv. 21.) We should remember the testimony which CHRIST himself gave to such preaching:—"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." By this we learn the great importance of this part of the Service, and how competent is Holy Scripture, *thus read*, to make us wise unto salvation, even when no word of comment is added. The HOLY SPIRIT accompanies this reading, and blesses it to all who have ears to hear: so, if it does not profit, it is only because it "is not mixed with faith in them that hear it."

The *Te Deum*, which follows, is a very ancient hymn; one of the sublimest compositions of uninspired devotion. It came into general use in the time of St. Ambrose, by whom it was introduced to the Church in Milan at the baptism of

St. Augustine. It has been well observed that, "as the Nicene Creed is indirectly a hymn, so this hymn is indirectly a creed." Its place in this part of the Service, therefore, is very appropriate. The *Benedicite*, which is often used in place of the *Te Deum*, is a Hebrew paraphrase of the 148th Psalm, and is called in the Apocrypha "The Song of The Three Children," that is to say, of Ananias, Misael, and Azarias, in the fiery furnace of Nebuchadnezzar. After the Second Lesson we have the *Jubilate*, a very appropriate Psalm, or else the hymn of Zacharias, in which he hailed the coming of the Redeemer, at the circumcision of his son, John Baptist.

"Faith cometh by hearing;" and therefore, having heard the word, we endeavour to show that it has been received into good and honest hearts, by professing our faith in it. The Apostles' Creed is now recited, as that "form of sound words" which we are commanded to hold fast. And it is well called the Apostles' Creed; for, as has been shown by a learned author, there is nothing in it which may not be found in the single book of the "Acts of the Apostles." In the Nicene Creed, which is used on great festivals, we say the same in paraphrase; and both creeds may be regarded as paraphrases of the Baptismal formula. In the germ, then, the creeds were given by CHRIST himself. He who truly believes "in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST."

believes these creeds, which simply affirm what Holy Scripture testifies concerning each person in the Godhead. Thus, "the descent into Hell" (or Hades) is asserted of CHRIST by St. Peter. (Acts ii. 29–36.) The "Communion of Saints" is that common fellowship of Christians which is like the common blood of one family, and which consists in a common partaking of the Spirit, who dwells in all believers that are baptized into the one body of Christ. (I. Cor. xii. 13.) So "the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church" is described in Scripture, and declared to be the work of the HOLY GHOST. (Eph. ii. 19.) Nobody can doubt that St. Paul, in the Ephesians, speaks of that same fabric, built on Christ, the Rock, against which Christ himself declared the gates of hell should never prevail. So, when we compare "the remission of sins," in the one creed, with the "*one baptism* for the remission of sins," in the other, we see how the primitive Church understood the expression of CHRIST to the Apostles:—"Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted." They had no idea of a Confessional, but only of the Sacrament, ordained by Christ himself, of which St. Peter says, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of JESUS CHRIST, *for the remission of sins*, and ye shall receive the gift of the HOLY GHOST." How entirely Scriptural is every word of these ancient Symbols of the Church of CHRIST!

As we have all one faith, in one only living and true God, we are now ready to complete our

prayers, by full and united supplication, before the throne of Grace. Instead of the kiss of charity which used to be interchanged by the brethren at this point in the primitive worship,—for in those days, as in the Jewish synagogues to this day, men and women were not permitted to sit together in public worship,—we have now a fraternal benediction between the minister and people. He says, *The Lord be with you*, and they rejoin, *And with thy spirit*. So all kneel down together, and the prayer proceeds, in fervent charity, and faith, and hope.

First, we have, in the form of brief versicles and responses, petitions for mercy, salvation, purity, and sanctification. These ejaculations are from the 85th and 51st Psalms; and their selection from such a source pays tribute to the example of our dear Redeemer, who, even in the agonies of Crucifixion, expressed Himself, not in extemporaneous petitions, but in the language of the Psalter. In the agony of the Garden, also, it should be remembered that He repeated His prayers, "saying the same words" thrice; a fact which fully justifies the occasional recurrence of similar forms in the Service.

Then follows the Collect for the day, borrowed from the proper Liturgy, or Communion Service. To this Collect peculiar attention should be given, as supplying a sort of key-note to the other prayers. On the greater festivals and fasts, the Collect for the day often lends itself, in a striking

manner, to those which follow it, bringing into prominence now one and now another expression, and freshening it with special significance.

The Collect for peace is a very ancient one: and as it comes from the Sacramentary of Gregory the Great, (who was Bishop of Rome, before the Papal claims were set up,) we trace its place in our Liturgy to the Mission of St. Augustine, whom he sent to convert our Anglo-Saxon forefathers.

The Collect for Grace is from an ancient Greek source, and reminds us of the Greek origin of the primitive British Church, which existed in England from Apostolic times, and which afterwards became one with that of the Anglo-Saxons, converted by St. Augustine.

The Prayer for the Civil Authority reminds us of the command of St. Paul to Timothy, that such intercessions should be offered. (I. Tim. ii. 1, 2.) And as the Apostle says that "*first of all* supplications should be made for all men," and then names "kings, and all that are in authority," it must be noted that the first place in the intercessory prayers is thus assigned to such persons. After this, the minister begins the Litany, on the proper days, unless it is to be said at a later hour. Otherwise, he continues as is laid down.

Another Apostolic injunction is obeyed in the Collect for the clergy and people, which comes next. How often the Apostle exhorts the faithful to pray for himself and his fellow-labourers! This prayer, also, is taken from the ancient prayer-book

of St. Gregory, and from that of his predecessor, Gelasius. It has been used in the Church of England for more than twelve hundred years; and how great and manifold are the blessings which it has brought down, through the intercession of CHRIST, upon that Church, in the faithful men who have been numbered among its Apostles, and martyrs, and pastors, and evangelists!

The prayer *for all conditions of men*, is of comparatively modern origin; for it was added only two centuries ago. But it is a faithful embodiment of the subjects which St. Paul suggests to Timothy as those for which we ought to pray. The petition for the Holy Church Universal, or, as it runs in the original, for "the good estate of the Catholic Church," is a token of unity with all Apostolic Churches, in whatever they retain that is truly Apostolic, and of charity for them, in wishing the reformation of what they may have that is not such. At the same time, in very becoming language, we pray for a blessed reunion among "all who profess and call themselves Christians," and for their restoration to a confession of the entire faith once delivered to the saints. This, then, is a prayer of fervent charity, breathing the love of souls, and therefore the spirit of the Redeemer, in every line.

There is some difference of practice in the use of the *Occasional prayers* and *thanksgivings*, and the weight of authority is in favour of their insertion just before the prayer of St. Chrysostom. But, in

a matter which has always been differently understood, the mind of the Church is doubtful; and it cannot be improper to admire the solemn and happy effect with which they are introduced in this more suitable place, by many of the clergy. From general intercessions for all men, we thus descend to particular prayers for individuals; and then, using particular thanksgivings, for special answers to prayer, and other particular blessings, our gratitude swells into a cloud of incense for all the divine mercies, and the Service culminates with a majestic effect, in the concluding words of the General Thanksgiving. After such a comprehensive act of adoration, there is something so fragmentary and dislocated in the use of the Occasional prayers, that they necessarily suffer from it, "like sweet bells jangled out of tune." The *diminuendo* and *crescendo* which have been pointed out in the other usage, are entirely lost; and the special prayers come in like an afterthought. Having used the expression "finally," so long before, as respects intercessions, and then, having risen to the noblest commemorations of mercy, in the Thanksgiving, the recurrence to minor supplications and praises seems akin to the fault in rhetoric known as *anticlimax*. But, where habit has sanctioned this usage, it will hardly be felt; and the Ordinary of each diocese is the Court of Appeals.

In the Occasional prayers, it is proper to note the singular dignity and completeness of the prayer for Congress. Its constant use, amid all

the turmoil of politics, ever since this nation began to exist, has done much to give a national character to our Church, and to make it a bond of union. Nor can any human thought presume to limit the results which such calm and majestic intercessions have secured from GOD in behalf of our whole country, in the overruling of men's passions, and the consequent stability of our Constitution. The Prayers for the Ember Weeks are also noteworthy, as conceived in a spirit of primitive piety and faith; and the Synodical Prayer is equally appropriate, if not equally beautiful. It is always touching to hear a fervent response to the Prayer for the sick, and for others in need of charitable intercessions. It is so unselfish and so eminently Christ-like to bear one another's burdens. The Occasional Thanksgivings offer opportunities for the exercise of similar charity, in praising GOD for His mercies to others. We may not know those for whom we pray and praise GOD: enough, they are our brethren in CHRIST, objects of a common Love Divine, and redeemed by the same precious blood of CHRIST.

The *General Thanksgiving* was added to the Service in 1660, and, like the prayer that precedes it, gives proof that much Liturgic skill survived in the Church even at that modern period in her history. It is a happy thing that we cannot refer their authorship, confidently, to individuals; although the bishops who had chief part in them are said to be known. The glory of the Prayer-book is

God's only: the merits of men need not concern us in our approaches to God. We only know that these prayers are the Church's clothing, and that it is of "wrought gold."

The Churches of Cæsarea and Constantinople, in very ancient times, made use of the short and simple prayer which follows, and which is called a prayer of St. Chrysostom, because it is from the Liturgy which bears his name. Its beauty is of that primitive sort which consists in Scriptural purity and point. It is said of the purest incense that it consumes in fragrance, and leaves no spot upon the censer: all goes up to God. Such are prayers, in which there is nothing human, and which, like Christ Himself, come from the Father, and return to Him.

The Holy Ghost is the Author of the next prayer, which is rather a comprehensive Benediction, in the name of the Holy Trinity. And so the Office of Matins ends, as it begins, in the language of Holy Scripture; that is to say, "not in *the words which man's wisdom teacheth*, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

The Evening Prayer.

This Service only differs from the Morning Prayer in a few particulars. Its second Lesson comes from the Epistles; whereas, as a general

rule, the second Morning Lesson is from the Gospels, or else from the Acts of the Apostles, which is the Gospel of the Spirit. The Psalms which follow the Lesson are also specially appointed for this Service, and two of the Collects are also peculiar. As in the morning we have a Collect for such peace as comes from outward circumstances, so in the evening we pray for inward peace. And this Collect is from the same ancient source with the other, both being founded on a Scriptural precept, I. Tim. ii. 2. So, as in the morning we ask for Grace to be with us through the perils of the day, we now implore mercy against the perils of the night. The source of both these prayers is an ancient Greek formulary. This Service is known as "Evensong" to this day in many parts of England; and such is its name in the English Prayer-book. When a *Third Service* is required, our bishops are wont to allow the use of an order set forth long ago in one of our oldest dioceses, in which, after a single Lesson, and the chanting of a Canticle or Psalm, (sometimes of the *Magnificat* or *Nunc Dimittis*,) the Creed is said, and followed by the Collect for the day, the Collect against perils, and then the prayer for the whole state of CHRIST'S Church Militant, as it stands in the Eucharistic Service. One or more of the Collects printed at the end of that Service is added with the Apostolic Benediction. Of these Supplementary Collects, use is sometimes made, according to the Rubric, in Morning and Evening Prayer.

The Litany.

The word *Litany* is Greek, and means an earnest supplication. As we use it, it means a penitential service, which is appointed for certain days. It is used on Sundays, for the benefit of the large numbers who can on that day alone attend public worship. But it is specially appropriate to the stationary days, (Wednesdays and Fridays,) which are so called because, from the earliest periods, they have been made days of penitential assembling, or *standing before the Lord*, in memory of the Death of Christ, which was plotted on Wednesday, when Judas betrayed Him, and accomplished on Friday, when they crucified Him. It is a Service which may be said, by itself, at any time after Morning Prayer; although it is more commonly said with it, and as part of it. On the greater festivals, it is sometimes postponed till after the entire Service of the morning is finished; but it can never be inappropriate for sinners, who should keep their feasts with "bitter herbs," and "rejoice with trembling."

Moreover, the Litany contains almost the whole

Gospel. in the form of a sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving. In it are distinctly recognized the whole Creed, and the whole Moral Law, and the LORD'S Prayer is part of it. It is a compendium of theology, recognizing the Being of GOD; His Trinity, His Nature and Attributes; the offices of the divers Persons in the Godhead; the origin of man, his temptation, fall, and depravity, and all that has been done for his redemption and justification, with all that remains to be done in final judgment and glorification. It is of all forms of prayer the most richly evangelical.

Besides, the Litany is a proper preparation for the Holy Communion, at all times; and on that account it is not out of place even in the Easter Service. In fact, when the Morning Prayer used to be offered at an early hour, it was reserved till just before the High Service, or Communion, and, while it was said, a bell was tolled, to let all know that the Eucharist was about to be celebrated. An old canon is worthy of note in this connection, which enjoined that every householder dwelling within half a mile of the church should send "one at the least of his household fit to join with the minister in prayers," whenever the Litany was said. There is real *faith* in the spirit which thus called for a representation of those who might not be able to attend; and, if more of it were to be found in our times, every family would strive to be thus represented, on every occasion of public worship.

Of Litanies, the most ancient is the fifty-first Psalm; but, as this is of a private nature, we may refer to the book of Joel (ii. 17,) for an inspired warrant for public Litanies closely resembling ours. To this day, not unfrequently, the Litany is said in English churches at a faldstool, "between the porch and the altar," in the manner commanded by the prophet, or, rather, by GOD Himself. The responses of the people are called *suffrages*, that is, words of assent, in which they make the voice of the minister their own. Perhaps the most ancient form of common prayer on record is the Litany in its original shape of *bidding-prayer*, in which the minister said, *Let us pray for all in authority, etc.*, pausing for the suffrages of the people after each commemoration.

The Litany has several marked divisions, which it is well to note.

1. We begin with the *Invocations*, calling on each Person in the Blessed Trinity to have mercy on us; and finally invoking the Trinity, as one GOD. We have thus an opportunity for dwelling on the several Offices of the distinct Persons, and on the unity of the Divine Majesty, while we review our condition as sinners, and crave mercy with respect to all our sins against the Mysterious Godhead.

2. After this, we begin the *Deprecations*, remembering that GOD visits the sins of the fathers on their impenitent children. With deep self-abasement, therefore, we implore Him to spare His redeemed people, in the language of the prophet

Joel, to which allusion has already been made, and which is repeated in the suffrage

After this, the Deprecations must be regarded as a sort of paraphrase of the petition, *Deliver us from evil.* We begin with the greatest evils,—sin and Satan, God's wrath and eternal damnation,—and then go on to enumerate the evils of soul and body which are the lesser products of sin. What are called the *Obsecrations,* are introduced on purpose to celebrate the Redemption of Jesus Christ, in its various parts, as the only ground of our hope. How sublimely these fervent commemorations of the scenes of Bethlehem, of the Temple, the Jordan, the mountain, the wilderness, the garden, Calvary, the sepulchre, and the summit of Olivet, are made to succeed each other as parts of the great work of salvation which Jesus wrought for us! What a supplication to the Author of our faith, by all that He has done, to be the Finisher of the same, in the saving of our souls!

3. Next come the *Intercessions,* in which, according to St. Paul's precept, (I. Tim. ii. 1,) we invoke the Redeemer for a world of sinners, as being sinners ourselves and sharing in the common wants of mankind. The spirit of love to our fellow-men is essential to our acceptance with God; and it should be our study to live up to the spirit of these intercessions, by becoming as far as possible the instruments of God's goodness in the answering of them. Observe the wonderful variety of human

wants which the Church forgets not, while praying for herself and for all who are in authority, in her holy pale. How many ships on the sea, how many travellers on the land, how many beggars and outcasts, how many captives and sufferers by the cruelty of wicked men, how many widows and fatherless children and sorrowing mothers, how many great states and empires, how many heathen lands where no Sun of Righteousness is shining, are blest by these unceasing prayers of the Bride of Christ, who thinks for them that think not for themselves! Truly "the world stands by the prayers of the faithful."

The "*kindly* fruits of the earth," we may note, are what in modern phrase would be called the natural or *genial* fruits. But how much more expressive is the old English word!

4. The *Supplications*, or fervent outcries of the soul to CHRIST, begin with the Scriptural form, "O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world." Then follows the *Kyrie Eleëson*, as the Greeks call it: that is, *Lord, have mercy upon us.* But this, and the following Rogations, the minister is permitted to omit; for, as they are of a very elevated tone of feeling, they may not be altogether suitable to all occasions; and so they are very frequently omitted on Sundays, and reserved for days of fasting and of more particular penitential exercises of devotion.

5. The Lord's Prayer, which has its place in all the services and rites of the Church, here marks

the beginning of the *Rogations*, which are a portion of the *Supplications*, but which are not so ancient as the Litany itself, dating only from the fifth century, as we shall learn when we come to the Rogation Days. It must be observed that when these are interrupted by the old Exhortation, *Let us pray*, it is because there is to be a transition to the less fervent form of a Collect, or ordinary prayer, as distinct from supplication. Observe the ascending in the response, from the form, "*help us for thy name's sake*," to the more zealous "help us for *thine honour*," which follows a commemoration of God's works of olden time, and which thus makes way for a *Gloria Patri*, introduced with sublime abruptness, while the Church is on her knees, as if in fulfilment of the Psalmist's resolution to "praise the Lord *at all times*," and to have his praises ever in the mouth. After this, the Supplications again proceed, and Christ is invoked as our Defender, Counsellor, Saviour and Intercessor, while by the title "Son of David" he is also, as it were, reminded of the days of His humiliation, and of the mercies He wrought in answer to those who showed their faith by giving Him this acknowledgment of His true character as the King of Israel.

The Litany concludes with a very ancient prayer, addressed to God the Father; but it is to be noted that the words, *put our whole trust and confidence in thy mercy*, were introduced by the Reformers, as defining the proper security for a

Christian's hope. This they did, because they had thrown out a corrupt Litany of the Middle Ages, which used to follow in this place, full of supplications to the saints, as if they were needed after CHRIST, or could be a ground of Christian confidence! Thus the rust and cobwebs of the papal times were put away; and the Litany, restored to its primitive beauty and purity, is seen once more to be like that golden censer which an angel held in his hand, in the Apocalypse, filled with much incense, "the prayers of all saints."

THOUGHTS ON THE SERVICES.

Advent Sunday.

The Sun of Righteousness is the great centre around which the Church revolves, and her ritual year begins with a renewal of His glorious light and warmth. Thus it happens that in the kingdom of heaven we live in advance of the world; we are a whole month on our way before the civil year begins. In this manner our Holy Mother teaches us to be ever on the alert, "looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God."

This feast of the Advent, which opens the Advent Season, is one which strongly mingles the most joyous with the most appalling thoughts; for while it strikes the key-note of our Christmas rejoicings, it dwells on the first Advent, with especial reference to its bearings on that which is yet future, and for which we are called to prepare Our "song is of mercy and of judgment."

How salutary to the soul this annual awaken

ing, and setting forward towards immortality! The Advent Season should always be made one of discipline, and of solemn meditation and reading on the Four Last Things,—Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell; for all time is but the prelude to Judgment and Eternity.

In the Christian Year, Advent Sunday answers to that day in the Mosaic year, when the "Trumpet was blown in Zion," preparatory to the Feast of Tabernacles. As Christmas is the Christian Feast of Tabernacles, the analogy is complete. A proper anthem for the day is made of the striking words of the Prophet Isaiah, "Oh that Thou wouldst rend the heavens, that Thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at Thy presence!" In some such thrilling passage of Scripture is often condensed the entire spirit of a feast-day; and here we have that longing after GOD, which is the instinct of the Church, His Spouse, and which says, *come quickly*, when the world would delay.

The minister usually begins the service with the cry of the Baptist, "*Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;*" and possibly the service is varied by the use of the first Selection of Psalms, which, from the striking propriety of the nineteenth Psalm, may suit the feast better than those for the day of the month.

The First Lesson begins the Prophet Isaiah, who is always read in Advent for the Old Testament Lesson, because Isaiah is the Evangelist of the

older Scriptures, and abounds with predictions of both Advents of the LORD JESUS. On this account Isaiah is omitted in the regular order of the Prophets, and is reserved till this time, both in the ordinary and special tables of Lessons. This Lesson will be found full of the judgment of the LORD, respecting justice, mercy, and truth, showing what He will require of us at the last day; but it also suits the occasion, as setting forth the requirements of GOD with respect to the Ecclesiastical Year, now opening, "its new moons, and Sabbaths, and appointed feasts." GOD appointed these observances, under the Law, yet because of the iniquity, oppression, and blood-guiltiness of His people, He was forced to say, "My soul hateth them; they are a trouble unto Me; I am weary to bear them." There can be no doubt that the Christian festivals, however precious to GOD when kept in spirit and in truth, are equally hateful to Him, if defiled by practical irreligion or unbelief, by cruelty to the poor and needy, or by neglect of any of our fellow-creatures in their temporal and spiritual wants.

The Second Lesson is that pictorial opening of the Gospel by St. Luke, in which the announcement of the First Advent is made to Zacharias and to the Virgin Mary. It contains the salutation of Gabriel, and the Blessed Virgin's response, "Be it unto me according to thy word:" in which the perfection of faith, and hope, and unquestioning obedience are so beautifully illustrated by

this meek "handmaid of the LORD." It is designed to prepare us for Christmas, and at the same time to remind us, by the fulfilment of the promises respecting that first coming, that the Judgment is no less certain in its time. When the appointed day arrives, the Archangel will again appear, and with his voice, and the sound of a trumpet, proclaim the general resurrection, and the gathering of all nations in the Valley of Decision. No one can attentively listen to the words of this Gospel without emotion, as the great events to which the inspired Evangelist introduces us, are rehearsed with all the effect of brilliant portraiture.

In the Litany, let the mind dwell on the suffrages, which relate to the Incarnation, and on those which supplicate deliverance in the hour of death, and in the day of Judgment.

The Introit will be, perhaps, the fiftieth Psalm; or its spirited version:—

> "Our GOD shall come, and keep no more
> Misconstrued silence as before,
> But wasting flames before Him send."

The Collect for the day is a sublime petition, illustrating the original idea of such a prayer, which is that it *collects*, or gathers together, the prominent parts of the Service for the day, and reduces them to a practical offering of mingled prayer and praise to GOD. Thus the Epistle, which bids us to "cast off the works of darkness," and the Gospel,

which exhibits the "great humility" of the first Advent, are united in the petition that we may be prepared for the glorious majesty in which He shall come to judge the quick and the dead, and for the award of immortality which is the inheritance of the just. Reflect especially on the language of the Epistle, that "it is high time to awake out of sleep," that "the night is far spent and the day is at hand;" and connect it, mentally, with the beautiful imagery of the prophet, "Watchman, what of the night? The morning cometh, and also the night." The resurrection draws nigh, though we must first sleep in the night of death. First awake, and fill the vessel with oil, and replenish the lamps, and then we may lie down in our graves, and have no fear that our lamps will have gone out, when the cry is made, and the Bridegroom comes.

The Gospel is designed to contrast the meek and lowly appearance of the Great King, in the days of His flesh, with the royal splendours which shall surround His coming in the clouds of Heaven. Though this Gospel, as it were, anticipates Palm Sunday, yet it is the narrative of the event in which the first Advent was consummated. Let it always be remembered that, until this event, the kingdom of heaven was only "at hand." It was strictly the Advent: the fulfilling of what was written, "Tell ye the daughter of Zion, behold thy king cometh unto thee."

In the Holy Communion, dwell on the thought

that many shall say in that day, "We have eaten and drunk in thy presence," to whom the Judge shall answer, "I know you not whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." The Eucharistic hymn will probably relate to the Judgment:—

> "How will my heart endure
> The terrours of that day
> When earth and heaven, before His face,
> Astonish'd shrink away?"

At Evening Prayer the First Lesson contains many marked allusions to the day of the Lord "when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth;" and the Second Lesson, respecting the First Advent, shows the nature of faith, and the design of the Gospel, as glad tidings of good things to all the earth. It is customary in some churches to provide a Judgment-anthem; but perhaps nothing is more impressive to the ordinary worshipper than the solemn singing of a part of the familiar hymn:—

> "Great God, what do I see and hear?
> The end of things created."

So solemn a day ought to be concluded, in the family, in an appropriate way, and afterwards in the closet. For private reading, nothing could be more appropriate than the impressive words of our Lord, beginning thus:—"When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy

Angels with Him; then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory." In fact, the earnest Christian would do well to begin with the preceding chapter of St. Matthew, and to read devoutly the whole of the SAVIOUR'S Advent Sermon. So one may spend a good day and lie down at night, at peace with GOD, and ready for the judgment-trumpet, let it sound when it may.

Second Sunday in Advent.

THIS day is designed to set before us the great truth, that the Holy Scriptures are given us to prepare us for Judgment, as well as to testify of CHRIST. The "testimony of JESUS is the spirit of prophecy," and the word that He spake, "the same shall judge us at the last day."

Accordingly, the Lesson from the prophet Isaiah, is a strong remonstrance against the iniquities which shall be punished in the Great Day of account: while that from the Gospel is the record of the Incarnation, and of the birth of the great forerunner of the First Advent of our LORD. The Benedictus occurs in this Lesson, but may follow the Lesson, with fine effect, as a sort of chorus It also contains the salutation of Elizabeth, and "the song of the Blessed Virgin,"—that earliest Christian hymn, and the complement of the entire Psalter of her father David. to which it is

thus added as a doxology. In some churches it is sung as an anthem, through the whole season; and in one of our dioceses it was first set forth as a part of a Third Service, in the year 1852, since which time it has been more widely adopted for that purpose.

In the Collect we entreat Almighty GOD, for grace to use aright the Holy Scriptures, which are "able to make us wise unto salvation." Thus, we acknowledge the Bible to be the counterpart on earth, of the Book of Account which is kept in heaven; and the spirit of our prayer is, that it may be to us an assurance that our names are written in that Book of Life, which shall be opened at the last day.

The Epistle is the portion of Scripture which supplies, in part, the language of the Collect, and which is further appropriate, because it sets forth CHRIST, as the "Root of Jesse" and the hope of the Gentiles. The Gospel makes itself felt, as an overwhelmingly sublime prediction of the Last Day, and of the fearful signs which shall precede it. It was the custom of the Ancient Prophets to give an immediate sign, or fulfilment of their words, in token that the ultimate fulfilment would be as certain. Our LORD, therefore, gave the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the Jewish Church and State, as the immediate token, or fulfilment, of what he predicted concerning the destruction of all things temporal. Improbable as it then appeared, that such a sign would

prove a reality before that generation of men passed from the stage of human life, we all know that it actually came to pass, and that the Jewish people have ever since been wanderers over the face of all the earth. Thus then the whole prophecy was fulfilled in its earnest, or pledge, and we cannot doubt that it will be so in its entire length and breadth. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but CHRIST'S word shall not pass away. This concluding text of the Gospel for the day, continues the great idea of the Collect, that the Word of GOD is the sure monitor and guide of the faithful.

Among the hymns which the Church supplies, none is more appropriate to follow the Gospel than that simple and touching paraphrase:—

> "Ah, how shall fallen man
> Be just before his GOD?"

In the Evening Lessons, the worshipper will not fail to note the prophetic words concerning the times in which we are now living, as premonitory of the Judgment: "the earth mourneth and fadeth away; the world languisheth and fadeth away; the haughty people of the earth do languish." The concluding verse of the chapter is scarcely less striking: "the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His Ancients, gloriously." The Ancients here spoken of are probably the five-and-twenty Elders of the New Jerusalem and other

Saints of the "General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn," which are written in heaven. The Second Lesson is a general exhortation to good works; but its leading text, as a Lesson, is that which, in view of the approaching dissolution of worldly things, calls on the children of GOD to be "not conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of their minds."

Third Sunday in Advent.

"BEHOLD, I send my messenger before thy face who shall prepare my way before thee." This prophecy has a double fulfilment. In one sense it has already come to pass. John the Baptist was the Elijah, who heralded the first coming of CHRIST. But the Apostolic ministry is the John Baptist of the latter day, heralding the Second Advent, and the coming of the Judge.

Accordingly, the Church, to-day, dwells on the Christian ministry and its great Mission, in connection with a retrospect of that of the Baptist, as its precursor. There is a marvellous blending of interests, and of subjects, therefore, in the Services of this day. As a mere preparative for Christmas, the ministry of John Baptist might well come into view; but again, as a preparative for Judgment, it is not less coincident, for its burden was and is,—"flee from the wrath to

come." With this message that of the Gospel Ministry is strictly harmonious, and the subject of eternal rewards and punishments is thus presented with that of Death and Judgment.

The Collect will be found to sum up what is thus asserted, with reference to the spirit of the day. The Epistle, short as it is, is admirably selected, as a condensed statement of the commission of CHRIST's ministers, and of the relations sustained by them, and by those that hear them, to the bar of GOD. They are not merely ministers of the Word, but "Stewards of the mysteries," that is, ministers of the Sacraments, and other means of grace, for the administration of which, they bear "the keys of the kingdom." They bind and loose, and open and shut; and when they do so *according to the laws of the kingdom*, then what they do on earth is ratified in heaven.

The Gospel is the testimony which our LORD gave to John Baptist, as his faithful steward and forerunner; and cites the prophetic promise of such a messenger, which serves to identify both John and his Master. At the same time, it bears on the Epistle, as showing that it was "a light thing" for St. John, as it was for St. Paul, "to be judged of man's judgment," and that He that judgeth both is the LORD. Thus some said of John that he was "a reed shaken with the wind;" others that he was a time-server; and others that he had a devil; but here we see his Master setting

the seal to his work, as that of a prophet, and more than a prophet.

It is in beautiful harmony with a Sunday-Service, so forcibly setting forth the nature of the Ministry of the Gospel, that the Ember-fasts occur in this week, and that the following Sunday is the Advent time for Ordinations. The Ember Collect used, to-day, at Morning and Evening Prayer, falls in with happy effect, harmonizing with the entire services.

In the First Lesson, at Morning Prayer, is a prophecy of all the blessings of the Incarnation, Sacrifice, and Resurrection of CHRIST. The nature of the Advent Season is brought out in the experience of the faithful,—"Lo, this is our GOD, *we have waited for Him.*" The patient waiting for CHRIST will be thus rewarded, at the day of His appearing. Observe, too, the prophecy of a crucified SAVIOUR, in the words, "He shall spread forth His hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim." The Second Lesson, while its record of the preaching and success of the Baptist is sufficient to justify its selection, is also appropriate to the Season as exhibiting the Judge under the figure of the husbandman whose "fan is in his hand, and who will throughly purge his floor."

So, in the Evening Prayer, the promises alike of punishment and reward, in the Lesson from prophecy, explain the propriety of its selection; but we must not overlook the promise of CHRIST,

under the title of "the precious Corner-Stone," which also occurs. The Second Lesson is appropriate to a week of fasting and preparation, and teaches us not to think the better of ourselves, nor the worse of our neighbours, according to any arbitrary standard of duty. But it still bears on the subject of judgment, and forbids us to judge our fellow-servants, adding the impressive warning,—"So, then, every one of us shall give account of himself to GOD." It is also a timely warning against the undue festivity with which some keep Christmas, pampering the flesh and starving the spirit, "for the kingdom of GOD is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the HOLY GHOST." The Apostle's rule respecting the Jewish festivals must not be stretched beyond their intent, as if the Christian feasts, ordained by the Bride of CHRIST, in honour of her LORD, were of similar indifference. This Lesson proves, indeed, that even such feasts might properly be observed; but the command elsewhere given, to "obey those who are over us in the LORD," shows that we cannot, without danger, refuse to keep Christian ordinances, which are entirely free from superstitious and carnal observances, and which have been appointed by competent authority, and honoured by believers, from the beginning.

Ember-Week in Advent.

How free are many to speak ill of their pastors and teachers, who have never uttered in their behalf a single prayer! How many profess a singular desire for the purity of the priesthood, who never fasted a day, to ask of God this blessing! Yet the Church hallows Four Seasons for this end, which she bids her children spend in abstinence and prayer; and, perhaps, if they were better kept, both the people and their pastors would better adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour. These seasons are called, technically, the *Quatuor Tempora*, or the *four times*, that is to say, *of Ordination;* for the Sundays immediately succeeding these days of prayer are appointed by the ancient and modern Canons, as the stated times for ordaining. Vulgarly, the *Quatuor Tempora* were called *Quatember*, and finally *Ember* weeks; the usage being very ancient, and the name having undergone the changes incidental to the lapse of ages. But, whatever be the name, no one can dispute its propriety, or the Scripture warrant for the institution itself. See Acts xiii. 2; xiv. 23. As a blessing is pronounced on all who strengthen the hands of their pastors, it is not to be forgotten that a curse is as plainly uttered against those who grieve and afflict them. Indeed, it has often been observed that evil hunts the

man who offends against a servant of God. See St. Matt. xviii. 7; x. 40, 41. The Master regards it as done against Himself, and punishes it as sacrilege.

Fourth Sunday in Advent.

The services, to-day, are singularly illustrative of the mingled character of Advent. They contain allusions to Judgment, Death, Hell, and Heaven, and interchange the call to joy and gladness with warnings of fiery indignation. In distributing the subjects of the Four Last Things, it is appropriate to this day, to dwell on that of Heaven, as the natural antecedent of the Nativity, which brings heaven down to earth; and the great result to which the coming of Christ was designed to bring mankind.

In the first Morning Lesson, among those passages which specially relate to the Season, should be noted such as these: "The Lord is a God of Judgment; blessed are all they that wait for Him. . . . Behold the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with His anger; and the burden thereof is heavy: . . . for Tophet is ordained of old." This Tophet is the place of everlasting punishment "prepared for the king," that is, the prince of darkness, the devil and his angels. But, on the other hand, the promise of reward and blessing is presented in the words, "Moreover, the

light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be seven-fold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound."

As a prelude to the worship of Christmas Eve, every one accustomed to that cheerful observance must have marked the text, "Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the LORD, to the mighty One of Israel."

In the Second Lesson, which continues the history of the holy Baptist, besides the obvious wisdom of the full recital of the missionary work of the great pioneer of the Gospel, we should observe the warning to "flee from the wrath to come." The last verse of this Lesson is remarkably coincident also with the last verse of the former Lesson; and the two are noteworthy for their unity of testimony, as to the Tophet ordained of old for the prince of darkness, which all those who do the works of darkness must share with him.

In the Evening Lessons, we have, with other passages of solemn interest, the promise of the Incarnation. GOD shall become man, and, as the Son of man, shall wear rightfully the titles of the GOD of Israel; yea, "A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the

shadow of a great Rock in a weary land." So too, in the Lesson from St. Paul, observe in how many connections he introduces the name of "our LORD JESUS CHRIST," in several successive verses, and how amazingly prominent he makes it throughout. This Lesson contains the Advent text, "waiting for the coming of our LORD," but it is probably appointed, as expounding the first Lesson Thus, he who in the figurative language of the prophet is a hiding-place, a covert, a great Rock, and the like, is explained by the Apostle to be "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

As the *Introit*, part of the 72d Psalm is appropriate: "Give the king thy judgments, O GOD, and thy righteousness unto the king's son. . . . He shall come down like the rain into a fleece of wool, even as the drops that water the earth."

The Collect was anciently addressed to CHRIST Himself, but is now addressed to the FATHER, in recognition of the truths, that CHRIST is "of GOD made unto us redemption;" that GOD the FATHER comes unto us in His SON; and that in CHRIST "dwelleth all the fulness of the GODHEAD, bodily." We, therefore, pray the FATHER to reconcile the world unto Himself, by the coming of His SON, which we are now about to celebrate.

The Epistle closes up the Season of Advent discipline, with a call to spiritual festivity. "Rejoice! . . . the Lord is at hand." The Gospel is the testimony of John to the SAVIOUR, "who, coming

after Him, is preferred before Him." CHRIST Himself testified of John, that he was "the greatest born of women,"—that is, by natural generation. Yet John says of CHRIST, "Whose shoes' latchet I am not worthy to unloose." Infer from this the Godhead of CHRIST; and "consider how great this man was,"—this great Melchisedec, to whom Abraham gave tithes, and John Baptist paid such tribute; saying, elsewhere, "He *was* before me," though here he says, "He cometh after me." In His Godhead, though not in His humanity, CHRIST was before all worlds, and says of Himself, "Before Abraham was, I AM."

Christmas Eve.

WE come to the great Eve of the Nativity; and the Church has appointed for its observance, two most appropriate Lessons. The first is the gorgeous prophecy of Isaiah, descriptive of Messiah's peaceful kingdom:—"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee." This Lesson is the rather striking, because it comes of itself into its place, this evening, according to the regular Advent reading of the prophet, and is not otherwise selected, than as it thus fits into its time, as if by providential coincidence. Yet, the decoration of our churches, on this evening, would seem to have been especially

designed to illustrate this Lesson, in its rapturous words, "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious." Of the Second Lesson it is also true, that it happens, rather than that it is selected; yet how strikingly appropriate is the passage, "Every spirit that confesseth that JESUS CHRIST is come in the flesh is of GOD." So, too, "We have seen, and do testify, that the FATHER sent the SON to be the SAVIOUR of the world;" and "GOD sent His only begotten SON into the world that we might live through Him." Other verses are scarcely less appropriate.

The eighth Selection of Psalms is commonly used on this Eve, because it contains the 85th Psalm, and others proper to the time. Thus, the 97th Psalm contains the expression, "Worship Him, all ye gods;" which St. Paul renders, "Let all the angels of GOD worship Him," and which he refers to GOD the FATHER, who gives this command, "when He bringeth in the first-begotten into the world." It would have been difficult to have made a selection more entirely suitable; and although the 85th Psalm is repeated on Christmas morning, it is impossible that a foretaste of it can diminish the joy with which every devout worshipper will join in the song, "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

It is customary, on this Eve, to sing anthems; and a great variety of them are in use. The most appropriate seems to be that from Handel's Messiah, "There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night;" followed by the chorus, "Glory to GOD in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men."

Few congregations are willing to leave the church without the Carol, after sermon:—

> "Hark! the herald angels sing,
> Glory to the new-born King;
> Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
> GOD and sinners reconciled."

The writer can also testify, from frequent experience of such kindness on the part of musical parishioners, that in some places the "Waits" still go round, late in the evening, and never cease till the rector has been saluted with this and other carols beneath his windows.

With respect to the festival itself, some are disposed to regard the date of the Nativity as chosen arbitrarily, and to be respected as the Ecclesiastical, but not the natural, anniversary. Every Christian is free to hold this opinion; but there are many reasons for regarding it as the true date, which incline others to believe it such. In fact, it is as well established as many other historical dates that are accepted without hesitation; but we should never insist on what is not clearly

proved, especially in a matter so entirely unimportant.

It ought to suffice us that it is an observance which seems to have been anticipated by the Law; in which the Feast of Tabernacles answers to Christmas, as the Paschal does to Easter, and Pentecost to Whitsuntide. They celebrated the typical presence of CHRIST in the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, as we do the great fact that "the WORD was made flesh and dwelt among us," or, as it is in the Greek, "*tabernacled* among us." Besides, this feast has been kept from the very beginning of the Christian Era, as we learn from St. Chrysostom: and its date was commonly supposed to be verified by the date of the taxing made under Cæsar Augustus, and by the records thereof kept at Rome. We know that St. John lived into the second century: and as he was the adopted son of the Blessed Virgin, (made so by CHRIST Himself on the Cross,) we cannot suppose him to have been ignorant of the true birthday of his Divine "Elder Brother," nor yet that he could have failed to make it known to the churches in which he ministered. Be that as it may, the festival has been so long hallowed, and is so full of the Spirit of the Gospel, that no right-minded person can fail to enjoy it. For the temporary deliverance by Queen Esther, the Jewish Church ordained the Feast of Purim, (Esther ix. 19, 26, 27;) as for a similar reason they instituted the Feast of the Dedication, which our SAVIOUR

himself kept. (John x. 22.) Surely, then, our great Deliverance may be celebrated. Long may this day be the peculiar joy of children, and the season of the gathering of families; "of sending portions to those for whom nothing is prepared;" of gifts to the poor, and of universal good will: even as it is written: "Go your way; eat the fat and drink the sweet, . . . and send portions, and make great mirth; go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive-branches, and pine-branches, and myrtle-branches, and palm-branches, and branches of thick trees; . . . for this day is holy unto our LORD; . . . for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

Christmas Day.

How beautifully breaks the morning sun on the snowy landscape, enlivening the cold air and dispelling the darkness! So shines forth the Sun of Righteousness upon the winter of man's ruined estate, and gives light to his eyes, and gladness to his heart. Well may Christians salute each other with congratulations, and, by acts of kindness and tenderness to the poor, proclaim the universal brotherhood of mankind in JESUS CHRIST.

It is a good custom to divide the solemnities of this glorious feast, when it can be so done conveniently, so as to have Morning Prayer at sunrise; the Holy Communion, with sermon, at 10 or

11 o'clock, and the Evening Prayer at sunset. In treating of the solemnities of the day, we shall suppose such to be their arrangement.

The proper Psalms for the morning illustrate the spirit of the feast, in strains of rapture and adoration, endited by the SPIRIT, and descriptive of the only begotten SON of the FATHER. His Gospel "goes forth into all lands," and "there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." To Him, in the 45th Psalm, the FATHER addresses the salutation, "Thou art fairer than the children of men. . . . Gird Thee with Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Thou most mighty. . . . Good luck have Thou with Thine honour. . . . Thy Seat, O GOD, endureth forever." In this connection too the Church is introduced, as the bride of CHRIST, coming before Him in her glorious attire, and worshipping Him as her LORD GOD. St. Cyprian regards this Psalm not less as a special prophecy of the Incarnation, but refers it primarily to the eternal generation of the SON, reading the first verse of it, "My heart hath generated a blessed Word," and considering it the language of the FATHER to the SON, rather than that of the Psalmist to the Messiah.

The First Lesson is very short; but perhaps it is the sublimest passage in the prophets. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light." What follows (say the critics) should be read as an interrogation,—as if it were, "Hast thou multiplied the nation, and not increased the

joy?" To which the prophet responds, in view of the union of all nations in exulting over a Redeemer's birth, "They joy before Thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil." He then makes a bold lyrical transition to another view of the first Advent, as a "battle of the warrior" with the powers of darkness; and its terrible results to the Jewish nation are presignified by the warning, "this shall be with burning and fuel of fire." The conflagration of the Temple under Titus was the terrible consequence of Jewish unbelief in their promised Messiah: and while exulting in the prophecy of Gentile converts, the inspired lyrist makes this apostrophe to the sad reverse of Gentile joy exhibited among his own people. Then follows that magnificent burst of adoration and of faith, "For unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

It is impossible that any thing should be added to this to heighten its effect, except after the Te Deum, the Lesson from the Gospel which narrates the fulfilment of the prophecy, in strains scarcely less elevated. How simple, yet how sublime, the narrative of the Virgin's arrival at Bethlehem; of the pastoral scenes in the neighbouring fields; of the great light that shined upon them, and of the message of the Angel! Who can look upon a

Christian congregation, gathered together, here in distant America, on Christmas day, without feeling the fidelity of the promise, "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people"?

But the service mounts yet higher; for the Collect, Epistle and Gospel, take up the worship at this point, and carry it on to the elevated stage of devotion, where the Holy Eucharist becomes our only sufficient expression of gratitude and praise. The 110th Psalm is a majestic Introit: "the dew of Thy birth is of the womb of the morning." From beginning to end it is full of "Messiah the Prince," and of the blessings of His covenant; and hence it is one of the appointed Psalms for Evening Prayer. The Collect not only celebrates our SAVIOUR'S birth "of a pure Virgin," but, recognising the exceeding great "love bestowed on us," that we also should be "called the Sons of GOD," it supplicates that daily renewal of grace, by which our sonship may be preserved, and we may be made, eternally, "heirs of GOD, and joint-heirs with CHRIST."

The Epistle is not only appropriate for its majestic proclamation of the Advent of the SON of GOD, fulfilling the Law and the Prophets, but also for the sequel to this proclamation, which defines His glory and divinity. CHRIST is not an angel, but, by inheritance, far better: He is "the SON of the FATHER,"—and where was this title ever given to any angel? Or when did GOD say of any created being, "let all the angels of GOD worship

Him"? Of the angels, God saith certain things, defining their character and office; but the Son, He addresses as God, the co-partner of His own throne and sceptre. Yes, continues the Apostle, to the same Jesus is addressed the language which defines Him as alike the Creator and the Judge of the World: "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thine hands." Again, "As a vesture, Thou shalt fold them up, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail." Such then is the little babe whom we have seen "wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." His name is Lord and God: the stars of heaven are the work of His fingers; and He shall dispose of them at the last. Now follows the Gospel, and the jubilant shout. "Glory be to Thee, O Lord," may well precede it. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Thus the Evangelist declares His generation before the world was, His creative power, and His Godhead. How is it that the Eternal God is born of a woman? The great mystery of the Incarnation is finally asserted in these divine words: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld His Glory; the Glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth." Here the Nicene Creed is introduced, (where Morning Prayer has been said at the early hour;) and there is no moment in the

worship of the entire year, where its lofty strains of confession and worship come in with equal effect. The Gospel which immediately precedes it, seems to prolong itself in this Creed, as in a sublime hymn, in which the Church responsively salutes CHRIST, as being what the Gospel proclaims Him, and lays her tribute at His feet.

It is important to observe the Preface, (which introduces the Trisagion,) as of like significance with the Creed, and as blending all Angels with the Church Catholic, in the ascription of this festal homage to the blessed Trinity, in view of the great humility of GOD the SON. How much there is in the Christmas Communion, viewed as setting forth the great end for which "the WORD was made flesh"! It was that His flesh might be broken and His blood shed for us. "A body was prepared," in order that He might "bear our sins in His own body on the tree." So then, we commemorate His death, with His birth, in the sacrifice of thanksgiving. From this holy feast, who can turn away without sharing the emotions of the shepherds of Bethlehem who "returned praising and blessing GOD for the things they had seen and heard"?

At the Evening Prayer, which closes this blessed day, the Psalms are again admirably selected. In the 89th, the Covenant of GOD with David, and with the greater Son of David, is the burden of the Psalmist's "song of mercy and of judgment." Of the 110th, what has been said in speaking of

the Introit, may suffice; only let it be noted that in the last verse, CHRIST is exhibited in His power, and His resurrection, as a mighty victor who lifts up his head indeed at the end of the fight, but not without stooping, in the heat of the battle, to "drink of the brook in the way;" or, in other words, to feel the suffering, and to share the nourishment, of the poorest of human beings. In the 132d Psalm, "Ephrata" it must be remembered is Bethlehem; and "the Anointed" is the Messiah, or CHRIST. Viewing Him as the Son of David, born in Bethlehem, the City of David, it will be seen that the whole Psalm is appropriate to the day, and speaks of the blessings promised to the Church, in the oath which was confirmed to the Royal Prophet, "Of the fruit of thy body, shall I set upon thy seat."

The feast of Christmas reigns over the whole time, till twelfth-night, or the Epiphany. Let the day itself, then, be sacred to the house of GOD, and to the joys of Home; and let such restrained festivity as is innocent in itself, be reserved for other days of this Holy tide.

The First Sunday after Christmas.

THIS Sunday always falls within the Octave of Christmas, and hence repeats its Collect, and is a sort of Lower Christmas. Its Epistle shows us

how we are made sons of GOD, by adoption and grace, through the Incarnation of GOD'S only begotten, and what an heirship we have with Him; while the Gospel repeats the story of this great mystery, and shows that it was intimated to the Hebrews in the name IMMANUEL. It may be worthy of remark that there is nothing in this Gospel to persuade us that the Mother of our LORD ever ceased to be the Virgin, (as the wife of Joseph,) if due comparison of the text be made with other Scriptures. As the last Sunday of the year, this day has a special solemnity, and is furnished with Lessons not unsuitable to the use very often made of it by zealous pastors, in reviewing a year of mercies. In the morning occurs the thrilling passage from Isaiah: "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." This for Christmas: but for the close of the year, the Lesson ends with a holy anticipation of that eternal country, where "the redeemed shall walk" in the joy of the LORD; free forever from the calamities and trials and temptations incident to Time: when "songs and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." So, in the Second Lesson, the *Nunc dimittis* of the aged Simeon blends sweetly with this prospect of immortality: "Now, LORD, lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." And it is a suggestive thought, that as it was revealed to him that "he

should not see death before he had seen the LORD'S CHRIST," so we are permitted to pray that the years of our mortal life may not end, before we, by faith, have not only seen Him, but acquainted ourselves with Him, as our strength and our Redeemer. The Evangelist's narrative of our SAVIOUR'S infancy and youth is so full of beauty and of instruction, that it would be too great a task to attempt any further remarks on such a Lesson.

In the Evening Lessons it is difficult to say whether the Christmas or the Old Year thoughts are uppermost. Those special to the feast will suggest themselves, such as, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd;" but it may be well to note those appropriate to the last of the fifty-two Sundays which every soul has added to his account with GOD. "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field." How impressively comes this warning, as the servant of GOD solemnly reads this burial-service of a year, which has seen the end of so many who were flourishing like flowers when it began! Then, the whole courses of the stars, and the circuit of the earth through her twelve signs, seem to pass in review, as he reads, "lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these, that bringeth out their host by numbers,—not one faileth." Nor let advancing years appall or shake the persevering believer; for "they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall run

and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint." This idea is developed in the Second Lesson, which teaches the source of spiritual strength, and also reveals the great reward of prevailing faith, in the text, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which GOD hath prepared for them that love Him."

The Circumcision.

THE Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by JESUS CHRIST. The year begins with the day on which the Holy child *made of a woman* submits to the legal rite which makes him a debtor to the Law, and designates him as "made *under the Law*, to redeem those that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." To-day His saving work began in blood, and, being circumcised, He undertook to fulfil the Law; which He alone perfectly fulfilled, and so showed the Law to be "holy, and the commandment holy and just and good." This day He received also His saving name of JESUS, the name at which every knee shall bow; and therefore, in the name of JESUS, our SAVIOUR and Redeemer, we begin the new year; praying Him for that circumcision of the spirit which will enable us to live or die unto the LORD —according to His will.

There are no proper Psalms for this feast; but the Psalms for the day are surely not inappropriate. The *First Psalm* describes the man of circumcised affections, and of habits disciplined to God's holy law; and the *Second* speaks of the things which God has ordained concerning His Everlasting Son, revealed in time as Jesus the Son of David. The thoughtful Christian will discern in the other Psalms, a tone of holy fear, very appropriate to the beginning of a year; and such expressions of trust in God, and of prayer for His protection, as well become the heart and lips of a pilgrim on earth, setting forth anew towards the city that hath foundations.

If instead of the regular Psalms, however, a selection be preferred, the *Second*, for the Morning, and the *Seventh*, for the Evening, will be found full of thoughts and expressions admirably fitted to New Year's Day, and proper enough to the festival. Thus, to select almost at random, how timely the good resolution, "every day will I give thanks unto Thee;" or the consoling promise, "surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." Many other texts quite as fitting will be found in the selections designated.

The Morning Lessons explain each other, and teach us how to read and compare the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments The First Evening Lesson sets forth the spiritual nature of the Law as requiring the circumcision of the heart, and not its mere ritual symbol. The Second Lesson

teaches us that Holy Baptism is the true circumcision, and also unfolds its superiority, as a sacrament, to the ordinance that was its shadow.

In the Communion Service, the Epistle explains how all the faithful become the sons of Abraham, though they have not the outward circumcision of the flesh; and the Holy Gospel continues the Christmas-story till the octave of the Nativity, when the son of Mary received the name of JESUS, according "to the prophecies which went before on him."

If we would walk with GOD this year, let us commence it with the holy resolutions which this feast is meant to inspire,—a mortification of our worldly lusts, and a pious spirit of "running with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto JESUS, the Author and Finisher of our Faith."

Second Sunday after Christmas.

WHEN there is a Second Sunday after Christmas, it falls so soon after the Circumcision, that it is considered a part of that feast, and its Altar-Service is repeated. But special Lessons are appointed, nevertheless, and thus an opportunity is given for bringing out the double idea of the Circumcision. CHRIST'S obedience to the Law for man, and His "coming by blood," as well as afterward by "water," this is the first thought. The second thought is

that of the saving NAME OF JESUS, "as the name which is above every name, and to which every knee shall bow." This name, specially prefigured in that of Joshua, and prenamed by the angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin, is the name assumed by the Eternal Word of GOD, on taking our nature: it means a SAVIOUR; and it designates the way of salvation, through the veil of His flesh.

Now, "the king's Name is a tower of strength," and the First Lesson may be regarded as setting forth the might and power which GOD'S people possess in the name of Him who is their "strength and their Redeemer." The Incarnate GOD; this is the thing signified by the name of a man given to the SON of GOD; and this is that truth in which the Gospel finds free course, and glorifies itself among men. We therefore bow at the name of JESUS, because, though it is the name of a man, we would confess its dignity, when it is made the name of the Divine person who condescended to bear it. In the Second Lesson the new circumcision is brought into view, in the baptism of JESUS. He comes by water as well as by blood.

In the Evening, we have the prophecy which is applied to our Lord expressly by the Evangelist, St. Matthew, and the whole of which is a picture of *Jesus as a Saviour*. St. Paul quotes another passage out of it, as applied to CHRIST: "He will magnify the Law, and make it honourable." In the Second Lesson, "we see JESUS, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of

death, crowned with glory and honour." In other words, we see the man JESUS of Nazareth, exalted to the right hand of the FATHER, and redeemed humanity reigning there in Him and with Him. The whole chapter is devoted to expounding the nature of CHRIST, as the true Joshua, called here the "Captain of our Salvation." So, in the book of Joshua, when CHRIST appeared to the successor of Moses, to let him know that he was but a type and shadow of Himself, He did so as "the Captain of the LORD'S host."

Epiphany.

THIS festival, called also Twelfth-day, is one of peculiar interest to those who realize the great power of GOD, by which we Gentiles have received the Gospel. On this day came the first-fruits of the Gentiles, to pay homage to the new-born King of Nations; thus rendering an early representative acknowledgment of His lawful right in behalf of all the Gentile world. As for us, who dwell in these "uttermost parts of the earth," which were peculiarly given to the only begotten SON for His inheritance, there seems a great propriety that we should keep the feast with a willing and a holy worship; presenting ourselves before GOD, on its recurrence, as living witnesses,

that those "who sat in darkness have seen a great light."

The song of Simeon should be used to-day, if not during the Season, as an Anthem.

In the Daily Morning and Evening Prayer, we observe a very delicate and beautiful judgment in the appointment of Lessons. As the word Epiphany implies a glorious shining, or manifestation, there can be no need of pointing out the propriety of the First Morning Lesson, which begins with a blaze of glory; the whole of which is so cheering a prediction of the ingathering of the nations; and in which the visit of the wise men is particularly prophesied, in the passage, "they shall bring gold and incense." The Second Lesson contains that solemn warning by which the great Doctor of the Gentiles calls on his converts to be humble, and not to copy the Jew, in despising others, as being now a chosen people; informing them that if God had dealt so severely with his former people as to cut them off for their barrenness, it was evident that the Gentiles who were but grafted into the good old olive-tree, would not be more tenderly treated if they also should prove cumberers of the ground. The two Lessons taken together will have a most happy effect upon the heart of the truly devout believer. The one calls him to give God glory, for the unspeakable blessings of the Gospel; and the other to fear before Him, lest the richness of the gift should, by neglect, bring in the end a greater

condemnation. The latter suggests some serious ideas with respect to the future prospects of the Jews, and of the fulfilling of "the times of the Gentiles:" as well as, in the concluding verse, an humbling view of our ability to foresee how or in what degree the mercies of CHRIST, through the Gospel, are to abound to all mankind.

When we reflect, however, that the Apostle is addressing the Church of Rome in her virgin purity, it does certainly seem as if he were intimating her awful apostasy and rejection, when he says, so solemnly, "Because of unbelief they were broken off, and *thou standest by faith:* be *not high-minded, but fear;* for if GOD spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of GOD, toward *thee goodness if thou continue in his goodness, otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.*" Here, certainly, is no intimation even of indefectibility in the See of Rome; and we are, possibly, beholding the days in which this awful excision is near. Let us also fear and not triumph in so great a downfall!

The evening Lessons, in like manner, will impress the thoughtful with a pleasing sense of propriety. The first is in the same vein of prophetic rapture, which characterizes all the promises of the Gospel-Day, which were made to the Ancient Church by the burning lips of Isaiah. The second, which is repeated as the Gospel on the second Sunday, is the history of one of the *Epiphanies;* for

the ancient name of this feast is in the plural, and includes the commemoration, besides that of the visit of the Magi, of the first miracle, and of the baptism of our LORD, in which he was first manifested to Israel. Indeed, this baptism is a primary Epiphany, in view, especially, of that *anointing* of the HOLY GHOST which manifested Him as the MESSIAH, that is, the anointed Prophet, Priest, and King, who had been promised from the beginning of the world.

Here it is customary to sing from the metrical version:—

> "The Kings of Tarshish and the Isles
> Shall costly presents bring."

In the Altar-Service, the Epistle is appropriately taken from St. Paul, to show the might and grace of GOD, in making that Apostle a "chosen vessel of His name to the Gentiles;" and the Gospel is the pictured narrative of the wise men's visit, as given by St. Matthew. It would not be becoming, perhaps, to lament that proper Psalms have not been appointed for this feast, including, of course, the 72d, and enabling us to repeat the prophecy, "the kings of Arabia and Saba shall bring gifts;" but by a use of the Ninth Selection, the officiating priest (or a devout worshipper before service begins) may get the benefit of the 65th Psalm, which is strikingly appropriate.

It is scarcely necessary to say that, in ancient tradition, those wise men were kings, (Psalm lxxii

10.) Bishop Taylor calls them "the Levantine Princes," and adopts the beautiful comment of St. Hilary, that their gifts were symbolical,—*the gold*, of tribute to a king, *the incense*, of adoration to GOD, *the myrrh*, of recognition as a mortal, and a man of sorrows. With Twelfth-night the Christmas holidays conclude.

At the altar of the Chapel Royal of St. James', the Queen of England still pays her Twelfth-day oblation at the Offertory, in gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Let us pray for the sake of that august and venerable Church of our fathers, which worldly politicians are uniting to oppress and despoil, that GOD would make such homage more than a thing of form, and that she, with other potentates, may become in very deed a "nursing mother" to the Church, and a defender of the Faith.

The First Sunday after the Epiphany.

THE Sundays after the Epiphany bear us gently along in the growing light of the Sun of Righteousness, now manifested to the world.

In the *Morning Prayer*, this day, we note the First Lesson as selected with primary reference to its awful rebuke of Idolatry, from which the heathen were called by the Star of Bethlehem, to the worship and service of the living GOD.

Besides this, the beautiful passage, "I will pour out water upon him that is thirsty," and the anthem, "Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it," sufficiently mark it as proper to this holy season of spiritual refreshing. The Second Lesson takes up the story of the wise men's visit, and subjoins the narrative of its immediate consequences, the flight into Egypt, and the martyrdom of the Holy Innocents.

In the *Evening Prayer*, the First Lesson contains that appropriate call to the nations, "A just GOD and a SAVIOUR, there is none beside ME: look unto ME, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." But the immediate reason for its selection is the prediction which the Fathers discovered in it, as compared with the 10th verse of the 72d Psalm: "The Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine; . . . they shall fall down unto thee, saying, Surely GOD *is in thee*; . . . *verily thou art a* GOD *that hidest thyself, O* GOD *of Israel, the* SAVIOUR." In the gifts which the wise men brought, if not in the words which they uttered at the time, they fulfilled this prophecy, confessing JESUS as, to their faith, "GOD manifest in the flesh," though hidden from the world. The *Second Lesson* exhibits the glorious instruments of evangelizing the heathen, which the LORD raised up in Paul, Apollos, and Cephas; yet forbids us to give the glory to these mere vessels of His election, and calls the whole Church to preserve the one hope of their calling, in the unity of the SPIRIT.

The old Introit, appointed by the Anglican Reformers, was the *Usque quo, Domine*, or 13th Psalm. We have it in our metrical version as the 10th selection, which is therefore appropriate to be sung as the Priest goes to the Altar to begin the Ante-Communion. To see its application we must suppose it the song of the wise men, recounting their long and patient expectation of the Epiphany, and their exceeding great joy at the appearance of the Star.

The Collect is from the old Sacramentary of Gregory the Great, but is found in even older Liturgies, and has no doubt been used on this Sunday for at least sixteen hundred years, by the churches of the saints. When St. Paul beheld the Epiphany of CHRIST on his way to Damascus, he at once recognised it as a call to a work and warfare for the glory of His Name, and he cried, "LORD, what wilt Thou have me *to do?*" In like manner the Church recognises the manifestation of JESUS, as laying us under the deepest obligation to devote ourselves to His service; and so puts into our mouths a prayer for wisdom "to perceive and know what things we *ought to do;* and for grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same." Let this service, therefore, be regarded as one peculiarly calling on us to show our gratitude for the blessings of the Gospel, by a healthful missionary zeal. If we value the grace of GOD, we must extend it to those heathen, who are as yet unclaimed to be the LORD'S inheritance. And let

us particularly remember in our prayers at this holy season, all true missionaries of the cross, wherever throughout the world they are bearing the sign of the world's redemption!

The Epistle is from the great doctor of the Gentiles himself, teaching us, in answer to our prayers, *the things which we ought to do*. The Holy Gospel displays the Holy Child in one of the earliest *Epiphanies* of that gracious power by which He "spake as never man spake." It tells us also that He "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man;" or in other words, that as the natural sun grows brighter and brighter in our sight from the dawning to the noonday, though in itself the same all the while, so the Sun of Righteousness was *manifested* more and more, in the flesh, till "we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the FATHER, full of grace and truth."

Second Sunday after Epiphany.

THE attentive worshipper will now be quite prepared to detect for himself the special texts of the Epiphany Season, as they occur in the Lessons. To indicate only one or two; we have in the First Lesson the reference to a "Light of the People," and the promise, "the Isles shall wait upon Me, and on Mine arm shall they trust." In the Second

Lesson, the Holy Baptist repeats the story of the Redeemer's Baptismal Epiphany, and again manifests Him to Israel as "the Lamb of GOD, that taketh away the sins of the world." At Evening Prayer we have the passage, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!" The whole Chapter is a sort of Missionary Anthem, and every heart must feel its appropriateness. The early Christians regarded prophetic references to the "Arm of the LORD," or the "Right Hand of the LORD," as designating the SON of GOD, while the "Finger of GOD" was often regarded as the HOLY GHOST proceeding from the FATHER and the SON. A beautiful Epiphany text is seen, therefore, in the passage, "the LORD hath made bare His Holy Arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the Ends of the Earth shall see the salvation of our GOD." In the Second Lesson we learn that love to GOD and love to man, or genuine charity, is the essential spirit of the Gospel. We often speak of a "missionary spirit," as if it were the peculiarity of a few: if so, those few are the only real Christians. A similar lesson is given us in the Epistle, which speaks of faith and hope, but enlarges on charity, and gives the precept, "let Love be without dissimulation." The Gospel is the manifestation of CHRIST by His first Miracle, one of the three principal Epiphanies. It connects with the Second Morning Lesson, being a continuation of it. The Collect will be seen to be appropriate, as

the prayer of Gentiles calling themselves the people of God, and asking for that peace which His ministers publish, and the Covenant of which they also establish as the Ministry of reconciliation.

Third Sunday after Epiphany.

The prominent thing in the service to-day, is the Holy Gospel containing the narrative of our Lord's mercy to a Gentile, the Roman centurion. His commendation of Gentile faith, in the words, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel," must also be noted. To this he subjoins a promise of the ingathering of Gentiles from East and West, and North and South, with the awful threat to rejected Israel, "but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness." The Epistle is a specimen of that heavenly morality which the Gospel preached to the Romans and other Gentiles, who worshipped Brute Force, and War, and Fraud, and Revenge, and Hatred, teaching them to throw down these idols, and to enthrone Love, Joy, and Peace in their stead. The Collect teaches us to look to "the Right Hand of the Lord" for that defence which the heathen expect from their own hands, their bows and spears, and from their false gods.

The First Lessons, at both Prayers, are pro-

phecies of the conversion of the Gentiles, so full that it is almost impossible to select special passages. In the Morning, the text which may most strike us will be, perhaps, that command to ancient Israel to make room for the admission of other nations: "Enlarge the place of thy tent, spare not; lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes." But then we must not overlook the repeated reference to the LORD, as the Redeemer, showing the Divinity and Atonement of CHRIST; and the highly poetical conclusion of the Lesson is to be understood as a prophetic version of the promise that the Gates of Hell shall never prevail against the Church of CHRIST.

The Second Lessons are also full of appropriate texts. In the Morning the prophecy of CHRIST, as a Great Light to the people that sat in darkness, is quoted, and applied to its first fulfilment in Syria, "beyond Jordan in Galilee of the Gentiles." In the Evening Prayer St. Paul narrates the sufferings of the early Missionaries of CHRIST, and their support and comforts in their work. He also shows that where CHRIST is preached it is the fault of those who hear it, if the Gospel is not manifested to them: 'tis only hid because they worship Mammon.

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany.

The Morning Lesson from Isaiah, declares the blessedness of the righteous in death; while it denounces the sin and shame of false religion, and the restless misery of the wicked. Its bearing on the Season seems to be in its description of heathenism, and in its call to the removal of the stumbling-blocks, that the Gospel may have free course. In contrast with the dreary and barren state of the unevangelized soul, is exhibited the promise of "the High and Holy One" to dwell with "him that is of a contrite and humble spirit." The Gospel Lesson exhibits Christ beginning His ministry by reading in the synagogue a lesson from Isaiah, and expounding it by a sermon in which He announces Himself as the "Holy One" thus spoken of in prophecy, and as being come, in person, to preach the Gospel to the poor. Observe this new Epiphany. The "anointing of the Spirit," of which the prophet speaks, was that descent of the Holy Ghost upon Christ at His baptism, to which He refers so often as His mission. Therefore, preaching His first sermon, He says, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears."

In the Evening Lesson, from the prophet, observe the promise, "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun." This promise of the spread of

the Gospel is followed by one still more striking. The great and critical periods of the Church, when iniquity has so abounded as to threaten her extinction, have ever been the occasion for signal deliverances; and thus the promise has been fulfilled: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him." In the Second Lesson we have St. Paul's statement of the blessedness of dying in the LORD, corresponding with the Morning Lesson from Isaiah; and he proceeds to show how the Gospel of CHRIST, and that only, is capable of producing such blessedness, in view of the great realities of death and judgment.

The Collect recognises our great spiritual dangers, and appeals to GOD for the aid of His Spirit, to support and guide the soul. The Epistle shows that the kingdom of CHRIST is not of this world, and that it obliges its subjects to be obedient to the laws of earthly rulers. The Gospel, which the Collect seems to fit more especially, displays the power of CHRIST to defend us in perils of the great deep, and in all the assaults of the devil. It suits the Epiphany, more especially, as displaying His power and majesty in controlling the winds and the waves. All the powers of nature obey Him, and even unclean spirits attest His divinity and supremacy, and bear fearful witness to the wrath to come. Thus He is identified as the Promised Seed, who should "destroy the works of the devil." But a striking display

of the hardness and uncleanness of the human heart is afforded in the conclusion of the Gospel; for this merciful and holy JESUS, in spite of all His marvellous acts of benevolence, is entreated to depart from their coasts by certain people, who find His presence an impediment to their unlawful gains. Thus, as we learned on the third Sunday, the Gospel is sometimes hid, when it would be manifested but for the disposition of money-lovers to worship the god of this world rather than Him who alone can give us the true riches.

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany.

WHEN we observe how full of Epiphany texts are the prophets of the Old Testament, we need not wonder that the Church calls us to dwell on them for a succession of Sundays. We must reflect that we are now commemorating the Incarnation of the SON of GOD, and the great ends for which GOD consented to this marvellous abasement. It is impossible that we should become too thoroughly acquainted with what Scripture has revealed on this great point.

When our blessed Lord began His ministry at Nazareth, where He was brought up, He did so, as we were reminded last Sunday, by going into the Synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and taking the

book of the prophet Isaiah from the minister, and reading therefrom a prophecy of the Mission which he had just received at His baptism, adding, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." It was, probably, by a providential coincidence, the lesson of the day in the Jewish calendar, and it is still the custom in Jewish synagogues for the Rabbi to call on some of the people to assist in reading the Lessons, a privilege which they often purchase. The First Morning Lesson, to-day, is this very passage of Isaiah, which the Holy JESUS Himself thus read as a Lesson, and then preached upon. Reflect on this as the Minister of CHRIST goes on to do as His Master did, and your heart will burn within you. The voice of CHRIST that day has never ceased. It was "the Father that had sent Him," and so afterward He sent others, and by His ministers He prolongs that reading and preaching which He Himself instituted at Nazareth. The Second Lesson, which begins the Sermon on the Mount, contains the Beatitudes, and is a call to all Christians to manifest CHRIST in their own persons and lives. Here is an Epiphany we can all ensure to CHRIST: "Let your light so shine before men." An exposition of the Law, as spiritualized in the Gospel, follows, to show us the kind of good works in which CHRIST would be manifested to men by His disciples. Glorious, indeed, are the ethics of our holy religion!

The Evening Lessons are, *first*, a promise of the

enlargement of Zion, by receiving in the Gentiles, and *second*, St. Paul's argument that the Gentiles are not bound to observe the letter of the Ceremonial Law, but only the Moral Precepts of Moses. Observe the text, "Thou shalt be called by a new name which the mouth of the LORD shall name." After the addition of Gentiles to Israel, the people of GOD are indeed no more called Israelites, but Christians: this promise was therefore fulfilled in part, when the LORD named His household His CHURCH, (St. Matt. xvi. 18,) and when the disciples were first called CHRISTIANS at Antioch. This great idea of a Church, denationalized and made to embrace all mankind, finds its further fulfilment in the Creed, where the new name is adopted with an apostolic prefix, "the HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH." In the Collect for the day we have the same idea, in the petition, "Keep Thy *Church and Household* continually in Thy true religion."

The Epistle reverts to the subject of charity, and continues the exposition of that Morality, by which the Gospel has sanctified even the "philosophical virtues," which were all that "the world by wisdom" ever knew. In the Gospel we observe the conflict of the truth with the powers of darkness. CHRIST was "manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil;" but the devil resists, and the victory is not to be complete till the end of the world. Meantime, the existence

of any wheat in such a field as this world, is a manifestation of the kingdom of heaven, ever though the tares are growing with them.

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany.

THAT grand Epiphany which is yet future is brought into view, to-day, to close this solemn Season. It is the Epiphany of the SON of GOD, in the clouds of Heaven, when men shall no longer be able to blind their eyes to the glory of His power and Godhead. Coincident with this will be the "manifestation of the Sons of GOD," whom He, as their elder brother, condescends to call His brethren. They will be part of His glory; the trophies of His victory; the evidences of His ability to "destroy the works of the devil," and to crown all by destroying Satan himself, casting him, forever, into the place prepared for him and his angels. The tares he planted, and all who refuse to be the Sons of GOD, must perish with Satan. This, therefore, is all summed up in the Collect for this day. The connection of the Gospel with the Collect is evident enough, as it is a full and thrilling prediction of His second coming by CHRIST Himself. This service, when crowded out of its place by the approach of Lent, is sometimes taken up, by a provision of the rubric, just before the season of Advent, at the

close of the Christian year; and this Gospel makes it as strikingly appropriate to that season as it is to this. The Epistle connects with the words of the Collect, in its opening ejaculation, "Behold! What manner of love the FATHER hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called *the Sons of God:*" and also in its concluding words, "For this purpose the SON of GOD was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."

In the Morning Lesson, from Isaiah, we have the passage, "I am sought of them that asked not for me, I am found of them that sought me not." Now, St. Paul (Romans x. 20) tells us that Isaiah was "very bold" in thus warning the Hebrews that the Gentiles were to be their brethren, in the true Israel of GOD. His Greek translation and, again, our English rendering of his quotation are a little nearer the idea of the Epiphany than the original, as here given: "I was made manifest to them that asked not after Me." Such is our New Testament version. The Second Lesson is another exhibition of the Christian life, in contrast with that of the heathen: "for after all these things (which the Gospel forbids us to be anxious about) do the Gentiles seek."

At Evening Prayer, observe, among the manifold promises of the Spirit of prophecy, that extraordinary one of a Christian Priesthood: "I will also take of *them* (the Gentiles) for Priests and for Levites, saith the LORD." Now, even a Jew was inadmissible to the Priesthood unless he belonged

to the tribe of Levi and was of the sons of Aaron. Here then was a prediction of a new succession of Apostolic Priests, and Levites; and we see the fulfilment in every diocese, which is a complete church, having its High Priest, Priests, and Levites, now called Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. The Second Lesson is a rebuke of the Jewish Christians for not seeing this great principle, that "GOD is able to raise up children unto Abraham" from those not naturally of his seed, and that the test of a true Israelite, since CHRIST came, is the *faith* of Abraham, and not his blood. Besides, CHRIST is the true Seed of Abraham, to Whom all the promises are made; and all who are grafted into him by faith and by baptism (the true circumcision) are thus made true Israelites. So, then, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all ONE in CHRIST JESUS; and if ye be CHRIST'S, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs, according to the promise." On this sublime exposition the teaching of the Epiphany Season may rest. It explains our right to use the Old Testament Scriptures, and shows that we are built on the foundation of prophets, as well as of Apostles, JESUS CHRIST Himself being the chief corner-stone.

The Paschal System.

Since Advent Sunday, the current of our devotions has flowed on, like that of a river. Now it is met by a tide, as it were, from the great deep, which obeys the ordinances of the moon, and often sets further back and overwhelms the Season of the Epiphany at its very beginning. In a word, we have reached one of the limits within which the Movable Feasts advance and recede through long cycles of years, mysteriously varying the Christian anniversaries, and suggesting a measure of time more in accordance with our eternal destinies than that of years and months and days. It is edifying to observe that this law of sympathy with the cycles of the moon was given to His Church by the Creator Himself, who placed the sun and moon in heaven, not alone for their physical properties, but for moral uses. He made them "for signs and for seasons;" and He developed this great purpose, when He gave the Paschal Season to the Hebrews, as the mere shadow of that which the Christian Church perpetuates till the Sun and the Moon shall cease to shine. So then, as the great tides of Ocean sweep around our planet, this great Evangelical System, of more than three thousand years' duration, continues its sublime and regular operation on the worship of the Catholic Church, from age to age, in such wise

that every rolling year is full of Him who is "the very Paschal Lamb, that taketh away the sins of the world."

That the Paschal Season was not given to the Jews, as a temporary and carnal ordinance, but rather as the germ of a perpetual and spiritual one, seems apparent, not only from the plan of GOD in creation, but from the express records of Holy Scripture, and from the analogies of other Christian Institutions. Thus, circumcision, as existing long before Moses, is perpetuated in the Sacrament of Baptism; and a similar law is recognised in the principle of the Christian Sabbath, which we call the LORD'S day.

In fact, it is reversing the true principle of the divine ordinances, to speak of these things as originally Jewish Institutions, which, in process of time, were changed into Christian ones. Rather, we should say, the Christian ordinances, in their richness and solid substance, "of the body of CHRIST," were foreshadowed by these mere types. The Christian Sabbath was presignified by the original institution of a Sabbath at the foundation of the world. Christian baptism was foreshadowed in circumcision; the LORD'S Supper, in Melchizedek's bread and wine, and in the Jewish meat-offering; and so the Christian Paschal, commemorative of CHRIST'S Atonement, was foreordained in the altar of Abel, in Abraham's sacrifice on Mount Moriah, and, above all, in the Jewish pass-

over, which "showed forth the LORD's death until He came."

It is singular that, in modern times, there are many Christians who recognise this principle so far as the first day of the week is concerned, and yet reject its fuller application to the feasts of Easter and Pentecost, although the Holy Scriptures furnish the same reasons for observing the latter as are urged for the former, and although the primitive practice which is always cited for the one institution, is equally positive touching the other. But how can we separate the argument for the observance of Sunday, from that which establishes the annual observance of the Paschal? What is Sunday, more or less, than—

"An Easter-Day in every week"?

The New Testament will be found as clearly and expressly testifying to the annual "day of the LORD" as a Christian feast, as it does to the weekly LORD's day. Thus, St. Paul says to the Corinthians, "CHRIST our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore *let us keep the feast;*" and a little examination of the text and context will suffice to show that both he, and those to whom he wrote, were just then celebrating the yearly Easter.

In fact, our LORD's own command and ordinance concerning Pentecost was a re-enactment of that festival, and of the Paschal feast, on which it depended. The Jewish Church had passed away, but, instead of abolishing its Festival system, CHRIST

bade His disciples tarry at Jerusalem certain days after His Ascension; and "when the day of Pentecost was fully come," and while they were devoutly observing it, then, and not till then, did He send the HOLY GHOST which He had promised. Now, it must be noted that they were all gathered together, not merely because it was the first day of the week, but because it was "the Feast of Weeks," or Pentecost. The true reason for the pre-establishment of this Feast of Weeks, was then shown to be something greater than the giving of the Law; and if the coincidence of the first day of the week with Easter and Pentecost marked it as the hallowed and sanctified day of the Christian Week, then, plainly, those feasts were equally sanctified as the great days of the Christian Year. St. Paul, afterwards, blames those Christians who kept these days *in the Jewish manner*, (Gal. iv. 9, 10;) but it is evident that he did not blame them for keeping them in the Christian manner, for he kept them himself, zealously, as appears from many Scriptures. (See Acts xviii. 21; xx. 6, 16; xxi. 18; and I. Cor. xvi. 8.) Besides, in his Epistle to the Colossians, (Col. ii. 16,) he shows that the rule of the Christian Sabbath is the rule of the Christian holidays. Jews cannot condemn us because we keep the *first-day*, instead of the *seventh;* nor because we keep the Paschal by a new law, which more clearly shows "the body of CHRIST" than did the shadows of the old law. All this will appear the more clearly from the principle on

which we hallow the first day of the week, and apply to it St. John's beautiful phrase, "the Day of the LORD." This phrase, originally, means the Day of the Resurrection, and so it was understood by the Fathers, because it is borrowed from the Paschal Psalm, (Ps. cxviii.,) which St. Peter quotes, (Acts iv. 11,) and applies to that great event. "This is the Day which the LORD hath made," says the Psalmist; and the Apostle shows that this refers to the day when the LORD arose from the dead, "making all things new." It would be hard to show that this great fact, in connection with others, sanctifies the first day of the week, without perpetuating the annual "Day of the LORD," which we now call Easter. It is also worthy of note, that in Isaiah's prophecies of the Christian Church and Priesthood, (Isa. lxvi. 23,) the new moons and the Sabbaths of the Old Law are clearly identified as existing under the new dispensation, though certainly not in their Mosaic form.

The mind of the primitive Church must also be regarded as reflecting in this, as in other respects, the mind of her Master. In the transition from the Jewish to the Christian Institutions, there were variations in the customs of different churches, as to the Christian Sabbath and the Christian Paschal. But all these were reduced to order, and settled finally, in the first General Council at Nice, in the year of our LORD 325. In order that Easter and Pentecost might always coincide with the first day

of the week, those laws were adopted which we have in our Prayer Books in the Calendar. Thus, the Council decided that Easter should be celebrated on the Sunday after the first full moon which should occur after the 20th of March. Hence it follows that no full moon occurring before the 21st of March can be taken into account, and that Easter can never take place before the 22d of that month, which is therefore known as the *prima sedes Paschæ*, or earliest Easter limit. The earliest and latest limits of all the movable days as they depend on Easter may be seen, at a glance, in the Prayer-Book Tables. In our century there has been but one Easter falling on the earliest limit,—namely, that of 1818. The concurrences which may make an Easter fall in the month of March, are much rarer than those which make it fall in April; for, out of the fifty-eight Easters of our century, only fourteen have occurred in March. The latest date possible is the 25th of April; for, should there be a full moon on the 20th of March, then the Paschal full moon will occur twenty-nine days later,—that is, on the 18th of April; and should that day be a Sunday, the celebration of Easter could only take place on the Sunday following,—namely, the 25th.

In the present year, (1859,) the feast of the Resurrection falls within one day of the lowest Easter limit, and we have the full number of Epiphany Sundays,—an interesting and rare occurrence, which few who are now of mature age will see

again. Such solemn reflections on the past and the future does this great system give us from year to year, in connection with the wondrous history of our Redemption. Well does the Christian poet say of it,—

> "Yes, if the intensities of hope and fear
> Attract thee still, and passionate exercise
> Of lofty thoughts, the way before us lies
> Distinct with signs; through which, in fixt career,
> As though a zodiac, moves the ritual year
> Of Holy Church. Stupendous mysteries!
> Which whoso travels in her bosom eyes,
> As he approaches them, with solemn cheer!"

We cannot but wonder, then, how any of the redeemed can rob themselves of that precious annual review of the successive events of our Redemption through the blood of the Lamb, which this great commemoration affords, and which, year after year, deepens our faith and strengthens our hold upon the grand fact of the ATONEMENT. The Gospel is a Gospel of facts; and its historical form seems to require this Evangelical arrangement of time, to impress it upon the mind and heart. "The rolling year is full of Him" Who is our Hope and joy. Hence, those Christian sects which have lost the Paschal system of fast and festival have generally, in the course of time, lost the doctrine of the Atonement itself; and so GOD justifies His own institutions as "wiser than man," even when they seem to worldly-wise men to be but "foolishness." Let us cherish, with all

Divine and Apostolic ordinances, this most ancient of all existing observances, this great Evangelical system which was pre-eminently the Gospel under the Law, and by means of which, seen in its imperfect form, CHRIST crucified was set before the eyes of the ancient faithful, for fifteen centuries before His first Advent.

The Paschal system includes Lent, and its preparatory days, starting with Septuagesima Sunday, which is counted backward, from the Octave of Easter. This is a purely ecclesiastical arrangement, but is designed to lead us to the great Remedy, by the way of self-knowledge and self-abasement, revealing to ourselves, first of all, our disease, and our need of an Atoning Sacrifice. The Paschal Season, in the strictest sense, begins on Thursday in Holy Week, and ends on Low Sunday, eight days after the Feast of the Resurrection, and from Septuagesima Sunday just threescore and ten days.

Septuagesima.

THE Church now enters the penumbra of her Lenten Eclipse, and all her services are shadowed with the sombre hue of her approaching season of humiliation. The ancient name of this Sunday implies that it is Seventy days to (the last day of) the feast of the Resurrection; next Sunday it will

be, in round numbers, Sixty days; then Fifty days; and then, when Lent is fairly begun, the first Sunday is called Quadragesima,—as being only six weeks, or about forty days, to the Grand Feast. Thus, we have turned our back upon dear old Christmas, and the group of holidays that hand-in-hand seemed fairly to dance around it; and, setting our faces towards the more sober, but still more glorious, light of Easter, we begin to number the days of preparation, which if duly observed will fit us to keep the Paschal as the Apostle commands, "not with the old leaven, . . . but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

Nor is the way in which the Church counts these days to be regarded as teaching nothing. It is the way of the world to reckon advancing time by addition; but the Church now gives us Seventy days, and gently hints to us how life is going as she bids us daily to *subtract* one, that so "we may number our days and apply our hearts unto wisdom." In these Seventy days, we thus see a striking emblem of our threescore and ten years, a model of the Christian life, which passes through tears and trials to the Resurrection. While we persevere through Lent, growing more and more desirous of the sunrise of Easter, and rejoicing to find the appointed days diminish as that day draws near, we learn also to pass the few and evil days of our sojourning in this world, feeling every day that we have one day less to live, keeping the

Great Day always in view, and singing with the Psalmist, "when I awake up in Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied."

The ancient Introit for Septuagesima Sunday is Psalm the 23d: "The LORD is my Shepherd." It is an appropriate choice; for, as Dr. Hammond has remarked, there is a pathetic strain in this Psalm, which well comports with what the day brings into view. The Lenten Season is especially the time when the Church would have her children learn how to live. Life itself should be a Lent,—a term of holy discipline,—with a Great Easter in constant view. And as even in Lent come Sundays, which are to be kept as feasts; so in Life, days of festivity must be in such proportion as to remind us that restraint, and watchfulness, and penitence are the business, and mirth only the refreshment, of our pilgrimage. The Introit, therefore, sings the joys of the Christian life, as consisting in following the Good Shepherd whithersoever He goeth; and looking with confidence to death, as brightened by the promise of the supporting rod and staff of Him, who, as Easter will remind us, has himself gone through the dark valley, and who will not desert the sheep of His pasture when He brings them also to its shades. There is something sweet, too, in the use of this Psalm, which tells of green meads and waters of comfort, at the very time when the world regards the Church as about to be fed with the bread of affliction, and the drink of tears

And while the way of the Church is set forth in this Psalm as the true way of following the SAVIOUR, its concluding verse gives utterance to a holy purpose of ensuring GOD's favour, by *dwelling in the house of the Lord forever.*

The Collect, which is the ancient one for this day, throughout Western Christendom, is penitential and deprecatory in its character, and seems to have reference to the many prayers which the people of GOD throughout the world are now about to offer up, for individual blessings, and for the good estate of the Catholic Church.

The Epistle is from the great preacher of Faith, St. Paul, and shows what kind of faith he recommends; declaring that even he, whose faith removed so many mountains, nevertheless found works of discipline absolutely necessary, lest he should be a castaway. Thus, though he has taught us that *bodily exercise*, by itself, profiteth as little as *faith* without love, he shows us, on the other hand, that the body must be kept under and brought into subjection, in the ways which he elsewhere recommends, by *fastings often* and *watching* unto prayer. To the same purpose is the Holy Gospel, which repeats the significant warning, "Many be called, but few chosen."

The choice of Lessons exhibits the same penitential influences. The plaintive Jeremiah becomes our prophet, denouncing to the wild and grafted branch the same warnings against unfruitfulness, which ages ago he uttered to that

good olive-tree, of whose root and fatness we Gentiles now partake—but only so long as we are not high-minded, but fear. Let us specially note the prophet's close and searching rebuke of sins against the peace and purity of society, and how he upbraids "such a nation as this," alike in the Morning and Evening Lessons. There is an invitation to the proper observance of Lent, in the words, "Let us now fear the LORD our GOD that giveth rain, the former and the latter, in his season: He reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest." The Lesson from the Gospel is from the Sermon on the Mount—that better Sinai, where Love gave forth a new edition of the Law, amplified and spiritually explained, and wrote it, not on tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart. By this law the true penitent must try himself, and he will find reason for keeping Lent. As to the Second Lesson in the Evening Prayer, it may suffice to say that the Church, thinking proper, at this Season, to read through the whole Epistle to the Ephesians, begins to do so on this day. The devout Christian will not fail to note that its great argument appears to be, our union with CHRIST by connection with the Church, and the necessity of preserving that union by bringing forth good fruit, to the glory of the True Vine, of which GOD the FATHER is the husbandman, and all the faithful are the branches. No one can understand the Epistle to the Ephesians and think lightly of the visible Church. And as the ex-

pression *predestinated* occurs in this Lesson, it may be well to note that predestination is defined by the Apostle, to be the foreordaining of individuals to the membership of this visible Church, not to unconditional salvation. Thus, God has chosen us to "the adoption of children," which, in Holy Baptism, he established with us. The question is, shall we "make this calling and election sure"? Our probation consists in the working out of our salvation, under this system of privilege, and accountability.

Sexagesima.

Lent draws near: and we—are we getting ready to use it aright? Now is the time for good resolves, as to what acts of self-denial we shall endeavour to practise by the help of the Lord.

For Sexagesima, the Psalm *Domini est terra* (24th) is the old Introit; in which there seems but little reference to the day or season: save as it describes "the generation of them that seek thy face, O Jacob." *Jacob*, in this place, signifies the same as *Israel*—the Church, called of God, and thus separated from the world. It may be considered as setting before us the pattern to which we must conform ourselves by the discipline of Lent.

The Collect, which comes from the ancient

Sacramentaries, exhibits the Scriptural and primitive doctrine concerning works of discipline and mortification; declaring that "we put not our trust in any thing that we do." Thus, though we should be able, at this season, to say, "I fast twice a week," like the pharisee, (who was right so far,) we rather smite our breasts and say, "GOD be merciful to me a sinner," like the publican, who, while he did this, left not the other undone. The Epistle shows how St. Paul kept his body under, and brought it into subjection. His stripes and imprisonments, his perils by land and sea, his "deaths oft," were not enough; he added thereunto *vigils often* and *fastings often*. Are we in no danger of being castaways, who though in *feasts often* scarcely *fast* on Ash-Wednesday, and cannot "watch one hour"? Or are these mortifications in such an example as St. Paul, and is this record thereof by the Holy Ghost, designed to teach us nothing?

By the Gospel we are taught to take heed how we hear. Our LORD Himself gives the parable; and adds the interpretation thereof, showing that those only who seek to understand His sayings, are in the way of being fully enlightened. His Church exhorts men to ask themselves how they are accustomed to hear the Gospel; and if their hearts are rocky, or stony, or thorny, or like the baked and beaten way, to "break up the fallow ground, for it is time to seek the LORD." Alas, how many, seeing, see not, and hearing do not

understand the teachings of the Word, nor the method by which the Church distributes every portion thereof in due season!

Of the Sentences that begin the Daily Prayer the most appropriate to the Season are those which *invite* to penitence, rather than those which are strictly penitential, and hence better adapted to Lent than to its preparatory Season. The Sentence, "When the wicked man"—and that from St. John, "If we say that we have no sin," will be found in keeping with the services of the day.

The First Morning Lesson, by the example of the ancient Rechabites, calls us to deny ourselves, for the sake of our Heavenly FATHER, as faithfully as they did, by the will of their earthly parent. It is an interesting narrative, and a most forcible expostulation with the people of GOD, who are often unwilling even for the few weeks of Lent, to practise as much self-control as the Rechabites did, (and do to this day,) with respect to the precepts of their fathers. The service refers to other duties, however, than "bodily exercise," and reproaches us with our general unfaithfulness to our FATHER in Heaven.

The Second Lesson is one of the most beautiful portions of St. Luke's Gospel, concluding with the touching story of her who "loved much, because much forgiven." Its appropriateness to a penitential season will be *felt* as well as perceived by all who have ears to hear. Observe, the reason

why sinners thought CHRIST should not have permitted her to approach Him, was the very reason why He did so: "she is a sinner." It was such that he came to save.

At Evening Prayer, the First Lesson is the story of Jehoiakim's burning the roll. To get rid of the fearful warnings of GOD, many, like Jehoiakim, pretend a contempt for His word, and endeavour in every way to hide their real fears, by an outward indifference to its threats and promises. Jehoiakim cut the word of GOD into shreds with his penknife, and threw it into the fire. The SPIRIT of GOD immediately dictated a new roll, containing all that was written in the former, "and there were added besides them *many like words*." Those who stop their ears to the message of GOD's rebuke only ensure to themselves the greater judgment. The *Second Lesson* is full of encouragement to newness of life, for those who understand the true nature of their union with CHRIST, by communion with His Church. In time past we were Gentiles,—without CHRIST,—strangers from the Covenant, having no hope, and without GOD in the world. But now in CHRIST JESUS we who sometimes were far off "are made nigh by the blood of CHRIST." Thus of Jews and Gentiles is made one Holy Catholic Church, reared on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, JESUS CHRIST Himself being the Chief Corner Stone; and this is the Communion of Saints: all members of this spiritual building having access by one

Spirit unto the Father. What an exhibition is this of our glorious privileges as members of that ancient communion in which we are declared to be fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God! This then being our calling, let us be holy even as He that called us is holy endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Let us pray, moreover, for the restoration of that outward and visible sign of Catholic Unity, which has been so much impaired by the Papal usurpations. Unity still exists, though union is destroyed. Every apostolic Church exhibits apostolic features which sectarians have forfeited; and the time is coming when the Church's visible unity shall be restored, and then the world will be converted to the Cross of Christ

Quinquagesima.

The days of bodily exercise are at hand: therefore in the Service for the day we are reminded of the absolute nothingness both of faith and works, without that love which is the fulfilling of the Law. "I will wash my hands in innocency, O Lord, and so will I go to thine altar:" such is the sweet language of the Introit for this Sunday, which is the Psalm, *Be Thou my judge, O Lord;* the 26th Psalm of David. It is partly penitential, partly jubilant. And as in Lent we purpose to be

more frequent than ever in our attendance on the sanctuary, it gives expression to this pious resolve, in the words, 'LORD, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth." The Collect is modern as to its form, but in substance it is the word of GOD Himself, being composed out of Scripture, so late as the year 1549. Its invocation of the Holy Ghost in anticipation of Lent, to quicken the love of the Saints to one another, and to their dear LORD, reminds us of the voice of the Bride in the Canticles, "Awake, O North wind, and come, thou South, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." All will agree that it is very beautiful, and surely the Catholic Spirit survived in those who could mould a Collect so well worthy of standing side by side with the ancient ones! The Epistle is the rich mine from which the Collect was brought out. If the Collect requires any proof, you have it in the Epistle; if the Epistle needs any comment, you have it in the Collect. The Holy Gospel is a foreshadowing of the crucifixion; and is designed to affect us as it did the Apostles themselves, when "JESUS took unto Him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished." Moreover, it warns us that "JESUS of Nazareth passeth by," and seems to take up the strains of the First Lesson—"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" The Season of Grace is com-

ing and going. Now is the time to cry, with the blind man, "JESUS, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me."

The First Lesson in the Morning Service will powerfully dispose to humiliation and fasting all those who reflect on the awful changes which have reduced the Catholic Church to her present forlorn and divided state. "How is she become a widow—she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces! . . . She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks. . . . All her friends have dealt treacherously with her; they are become her enemies. The ways of Zion do mourn, because *none come to her solemn feast;* all her gates are desolate, *her priests sigh. . . . Her adversaries are the chief, her enemies prosper;* for the LORD hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions." This is language that well becomes us in the present state of the Church, and it should prepare us for the day of sackcloth and ashes. Let us reflect that as the Seven Churches in the Apocalypse were still Churches, and enjoyed CHRIST'S presence, although some of them were grossly corrupt, so now every branch of the Vine, whether Greek, or Coptic, or Roman, or German, or Gallican, is to be prayed for, and hoped for, till CHRIST Himself has cut it off and cast it away. We have a duty to purify ourselves, and others if we can; but we are not permitted to judge others, or to attempt to hasten the judgment which GOD forbears to exe-

cute. The Second Lesson, while it tells how the early disciples of CHRIST "preached that men should repent," reminds us that, even among those to whom He ministered in person, there were some at whom He "marvelled because of their unbelief." By the example of St. John Baptist, we are taught to prepare ourselves for patient suffering, as good soldiers of CHRIST.

The Evening Lesson, from the Lamentations, suggests a pause for reflection at every verse. Yet we have seen its touching appeals read in the Church, to a congregation evincing by their manner not the least appreciation of its meaning, not the least conception of its delicate fitness to the approach of Ash-Wednesday. "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall!" And again, "It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed; because His compassions fail not: they are new every morning Great is Thy faithfulness!" Who can read—who can hear—such Scriptures, without emotion, contrition, and that "*charity* without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before GOD"? The Second Lesson contains the Epistle to the Ephesians, and concludes with one of the sublimest doxologies in the writings of St. Paul. The whole Lesson is a climax of fervid eloquence and majestic doctrine.

Ash-Wednesday.

The Season of Lent begins on a Wednesday, in order that, omitting Sundays, just forty days may be accomplished before Easter, in humble imitation of the Redeemer's fasting in the wilderness.

The Mosaic Law provided for a great fast of expiation; and the Christian Church, adapting the idea to the atonement of Christ, as celebrated at the Christian Passover, and instituting Lent as a proper preface of the Paschal solemnities, seems to have acted on the warrant of our Saviour Himself: "The days will come when the Bridegroom shall be taken away; and then shall they fast *in those days.*"

The duty of fasting is ordained of Christ Himself: there must be a time for every duty; and therefore the Church appoints a time in all respects fitting and appropriate. Not to "hear the Church," in a matter so Scriptural, and so true to her Divine Mission, is to run the risk of being made "as a heathen man, and a publican."

"Welcome, dear *feast* of Lent," says holy George Herbert, intimating that to fast in the flesh, is to feast in the Spirit: and, oh, how true it is, when the promised "feast of fat things" is now before us, in the sacrifice of Redemption! To this grand central fact all things are now subordinated: first we are made to look at our own uncleanness, and

then our eyes are turned to the Fountain in JESUS' side.

"Rend your heart, and not your garments," is the fitting beginning of the Morning Prayer to-day. The Seven Penitential Psalms were originally provided for the Services to-day, but by a pure accident the *Miserere* (Psalm 51st) has been dropped, with the "Commination" of the English Prayer Book. It can be restored, however, by making it the Introit, instead of repeating the 6th Psalm, which is the regular Introit; and by this arrangement, the Morning Prayer, and Communion, are supplied with the first *four*, and the Evening Prayer with the last *three*, of the Penitentials. Some clergymen use the Third Selection of Psalms, at Morning Prayer, because it contains the *Miserere*, and because the *Venite* must, in that case, be superseded by the Anthem provided with the Selections. Others use this Anthem even with the Proper Psalms, considering it allowable, though not obligatory, and desiring to drop the *Venite*, with its festal tone, on so solemn a fast-day.

In reciting the Penitential Psalms, let every soul reflect that he is a sharer in human misery and sin, and that at his very "best estate he is altogether vanity." So then—though he may be, in the world's sight, far enough from the condition therein described,—he is, in GOD's sight, poor indeed, and "there is no whole part in his body." In a few years the most healthy and prosperous

of us must lie down in the dust, and become a prey to corruption and worms; and the fire and the worm that are eternal may yet be our awful doom. With such certainties in view, and with such possibilities to be encountered and resisted by prayer and self-denial, every man may find these Psalms suited to himself; and happy is he who, by genuine self-abasement and contrition, makes them the outcry of his soul and body unto a gracious Redeemer.

The First Lesson is a solemn warning from Prophecy that the great thing required of a penitent is the putting away of iniquity, and the exercise of that love to our fellow-men which is the surest sign of love to GOD. In the same spirit the prophet elsewhere denounces mere formal fasting, (Isaiah lviii. 5,) and shows that "the fast which GOD has chosen" consists in showing mercy to the poor, and doing to others as we would that they should do to us. The Second Lesson, from the Sermon on the Mount, still further enforces this Golden Rule, which it contains, in our SAVIOUR'S own words and illustrations. Observe, too, the tender, but pointed, remonstrance, "Why call ye Me LORD, LORD, and do not the things which I say?"

To-day, the entire Litany is used; and after that, the Ash-Wednesday supplications. These solemn sighs are joined in by the whole congregation with one voice, when first the priest has begun them "between the porch and the altar."

as appointed of old in Israel. The flood-gates of the soul are opened in these words, which are taken from Scripture, and which the Spirit has supplied to help our infirmities, "as with groanings that cannot be uttered." Every individual offers them for himself, as knowing the plague of his own heart; and yet, in her corporate character, the Bride of CHRIST may be regarded as thus imitating her LORD in His fasting, and in His contest with Temptation. She uses what "is written," even as He did, and in His strength she prevails. It is a sublime thought, that in many lands and in divers tongues, but with language very nearly identical, the Church Catholic, in her sad and divided estate, still presents herself before GOD on this day, bearing this stupendous testimony to human misery and sinfulness, and to the fulness of mercy and of righteousness which is provided for her in CHRIST JESUS by His Atonement and Mediatorship!

In the First Evening Lesson, we have an ancient example of fasting in sackcloth and ashes, and of the benefits secured thereby. The name of the fast is justified by this Lesson; for, although we neither gird sackcloth on our loins, nor sprinkle ashes on our heads, as was done among Eastern nations of old, we do both in spirit; calling to mind the approach of a day when "ashes to ashes" shall be the sentence of the Church over our mortal part, and when it must submit to the sentence of GOD Himself, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt

thou return." In the Second Lesson, we have a most fervent exhortation from St. Peter, of which the argument is based on the coming of another day, when the world itself shall be turned to ashes.

For the Epistle, in the Communion Service, we have the words of the prophet Joel, "Sanctify a fast." It is a pleasing thought that when those ancient priests "blew the trumpet in Zion," they were, in fact, opening the high solemnities which we still perpetuate. "Let the bridegroom go forth out of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet; let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, *Spare Thy people, O Lord, and give not Thine heritage to reproach.*" Let Christian parents note also the words, "gather the children," which supply a hint to pastors and families that even children must not be overlooked on a day like this. The Gospel presents us with our SAVIOUR'S rule of fasting; to which it is only requisite to subjoin His other rule, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." No degree of "bodily exercise" is required of any one which is really inconsistent with health and the performance of other duties. The Church prescribes Fasting on Ash-Wednesday and Good Friday, and such a degree of abstinence on other fasts as is suited to extraordinary devotions; but she makes no distinction of meats, in the manner of the Jews and ancient heretics, and leaves details to every man's conscience, in the

fear of God. Real self-denial is the essence of fasting, provided it be in the spirit of penitence and faith, and not as a work of human merit. Fasting is not merely a monitor; making us feel that we are pilgrims, and "prisoners of hope," in a miserable world, but also it is an exercise of the soul against peril of the tempter. Many men are slaves to lust and drunkenness; they exhibit a soul in bondage to the body, and they say *they cannot help it*. They have never resisted lawful appetite, and hence unlawful passion has been too strong for them. If then we would prepare for the assaults of the devil, let us sanctify a fast, and endeavour to form a habit of living "not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord."

In ancient times the Church, on this day, put offenders to open rebuke; and while discipline is less active, let each lay God's comminations sincerely to heart, and judge himself thereby. And as commonly, on this day, the penitent and humble-minded alone are found at Church, a more profitable opportunity for the publication of Ecclesiastical censures seems afforded by this day than by the days in which there are more present than would be likely to receive the same in the spirit enjoined by the Apostle. Galatians vi. 1.

The Pentateuch supplies our Old Testament Lessons, during Lent, in the Daily Prayer. This is appropriate to the forty days, as the history of forty years in the wilderness, during which time

the children of Israel fed on manna, and gave us an example of all the experiences, dangers, combats, encouragements, and spiritual refreshments by which we are tried and strengthened in this vale of misery, till we pass the Jordan of Death and enter the Land of Promise.

Among private duties of Lent, the propriety of abstaining from ordinary amusements must be obvious. It is justly considered out of character, too, to celebrate a marriage in Lent; and if ever this rule is departed from, it is plainly a duty to dispense with the ordinary festivities and merry-makings. The writer has known the most unhappy results to follow an unbecoming marriage of this sort; the distraction of young minds, at the time and afterwards, impairing all the sanctities of Lent. Thus, the unreflecting parties who chose such a season for their wedding, may have been the cause of inflicting endless evil upon souls.

Among other private duties of Lent may be mentioned Intercessions in Church, and in the Closet, for all pastors and their flocks during this season of Grace; for Missionaries, and the heathen; for those who live in sin; and for Christians who have departed from the unity of the Apostolic Family. Let us never forget that God is dishonoured by the melancholy divisions which disgrace the Christianity of our country, and "by reason of which the way of truth is evil spoken of." Lent is a fitting time to exercise ourselves in seeking the scattered sheep, winning them back to the fold,

and saying to them, as we invite them to keep this blessed Season with us, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good." Let us recognise, however, the obligation of honouring, in such Christians, the gifts and graces which GOD may have already imparted to them by His SPIRIT, and let us endeavour to "speak the truth in love," as the means which GOD has ordained for "teaching them the way of the LORD more perfectly."

The First Sunday in Lent.

OUR blessed Lord fasted forty days without intermission; but while we endeavour to follow His holy example, every seventh day is a blessed feast, recurring like wells in the desert of Baca, and like pools filled with water, lest we should faint by the way. Sunday is always a feast commemorative of the Resurrection, and the Sundays *in* Lent are not days *of* Lent, though they partake of the solemn and disciplinary character of the Season. Let us go, then, from Sunday to Sunday, as from strength to strength, halting on the first day of the week, like travellers at a green spot in the wilderness, and then setting forward anew, with refreshed and stimulated aspirations after that heavenly Canaan towards which we are faring.

The old Introit for the day is the Psalm *Beati quorum*, (32d,) which is one of the Seven Peniten-

tials In the Collect we implore the LORD for grace to keep the fast, with due bodily exercise and for the proper spiritual ends. To this let all say Amen, with purpose of heart to make the effort it implies. Nor let any persons suppose themselves morally free to disregard the precept, as a thing indifferent. It is the call of GOD; and he that refuses to hear the trumpet which is blown in Sion, and to sanctify the fast, should fear lest he be visited with judgment for his neglect. Perhaps "many are weak and sickly among us," and fast in spite of their wills, because they do not voluntarily fast for their souls' good. They do not bring themselves down, in fear, and so God brings them down, in judgment and in mercy. When the ancient people of GOD refused to let their lands lie fallow on the seventh year, He carried them into captivity, till the time was fully made up, that the land might enjoy its Sabbaths. Perhaps in the same way now, by sickness and disease, He makes the neglecters of their duty in Lent humble themselves, unwillingly, and so keep the Church's fast. We speak not of those without her pale: we "warn the unruly" who boast themselves her sons.

In the Epistle, while its adaptation to Ember-Week is apparent in its enumeration of the gifts and graces of the Apostles and primitive ministers, we are also reminded of their labours and sufferings for our sake. The example of Apostles approving themselves by *labours*, by *vigils*, and by

tastings, is thus presented with that of their Divine LORD and SAVIOUR, which follows in the Holy Gospel. This latter exhibits the Man of Sorrows, in that "fasting and temptation" by which we supplicate His mercy in the Litany. It shows the temptation of the Prophet in the Desert; of the Priest on the Temple; and of the King upon the Mountain. It tells us how He was tempted in all points like as we are; assailed by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life,—the flesh, the world, and the devil,—yet without sin. It teaches us how He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and reminds us of the sword of the Spirit, wherewith He has shown us how to resist the devil and to make him flee from us. He overcame the devil, not in the power of His Godhead, but with the weapon which is given to man. He foiled the tempter with the word of GOD. His sword and shield alike were simply, *It is written.*

Christian, in the holy tide of Lent the SPIRIT leadeth thee away from the world, into a wilderness, where thou art bidden for a while to exercise thyself in that valiant fight, which thou vowedst at the font. Look, then, unto JESUS, and in His might and in His manner, wrestle mightily and prevail. Learn, while thou fastest, that "man shall not live by bread alone;" that the promise of GOD to save thee must not encourage thee to presume; and that the pursuit of worldly objects in this life is the *worship of the Devil!*

Search the Holy Scriptures as the Church interprets them, that thou mayest have an answer to the Tempter; and be warned of the perversions of Scripture, by which Satan and his ministers beguile and deceive them that are "unlearned and unstable." Learn also that, as Satan tempts in three ways, through suggestion, delectation, and consent, so if thou resist *suggestion* thou hast not sinned, but triumphed, as thy SAVIOUR did. So shalt thou be more than conqueror through Him that loveth us; and "as angels came and ministered to Him," so after thy fight, alike of Lent and life, thou shalt find thyself refreshed by the service of those "who are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation."

If there be those in the Church who deem their baptism and their Catholic privileges sufficient to save them, without that holiness which alone can qualify them to "see the LORD," let them learn from the First Lesson in the Morning Prayer, this day, how fearful is their delusion. The Jews, who had among them "the temple of the LORD," supposed this a sufficient safeguard. If any one threatened them with a righteous retribution, they were ready with the answer, that GOD could never allow His own Holy Place to be defiled or His Holy Mountain to be made a desolation. They pointed to the great stones and the towering pinnacles of the House of GOD, and said, "the temple of the LORD are these." And this was true: and "if ye thoroughly amend your ways,

and your doings," said the LORD, "then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever." But, on the other hand, said the LORD, suppose not that this will save you if ye go on in sin and pretend that ye cannot help it. My Holy Ark and my Tabernacle were once in Shiloh, as they are now on Mount Zion; yet for the sins of Eli and his sons, and for the wickedness of the people, the Philistines were allowed to destroy forever that Tabernacle, and to take captive the Ark itself. Remember this and be sure that, though the temple of the LORD be among you, it shall not save you, except ye repent. Such was the warning; but they regarded not. And judgment came, and the temple was destroyed, and "from the streets of Jerusalem ceased the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, and the land was desolate."

The Church now bids her children consider these solemn admonitions; and to remember that "baptism doth now save us," but not unless we preserve unto the end, when the Bridegroom cometh, that "answer of a good conscience" which is the marriage garment required. Doubtless the temple of GOD is among us, and we are true inhabitants of the city of GOD. But so much the more does GOD require of us to be indeed the salt of the Earth, and the light of the world. If we lose our savour of holiness and bury our candle under a bushel, the LORD will come quickly, and take away

our candlestick out of its place; and the wicked and slothful servant will be the more severely punished for wearing the livery of a Master whom he has disobeyed and whose cause he has disgraced.

As the Lenten Ember-week begins this day, the Church, in her Second Morning Lesson, presents us with the history of the call and commission of the twelve Apostles, and with the sermon of our blessed LORD on that occasion, showing the duties, the responsibilities, and the dignity of those who are made His messengers to men. It concludes with the solemn assurance. "He that receiveth you receiveth Me; and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent me." Note also the solemn warnings of CHRIST to those who despise or injure the servants of GOD, in the discharge of their duties! By some, it is thought no great matter to neglect the payment of a pastor's salary, to offer him the meanest support, to grieve his heart, and hinder him in his labour. But CHRIST reckons all these wrongs as done directly to Him. At this solemn Lenten Season the clergy often exhaust themselves in labouring for souls. Many have been Christ's martyrs, in America, who have thus "given their life for the sheep." Miserable, then, are they who afflict and grieve the soul of a zealous pastor; and blessed are they who sustain and comfort him, and bear with his infirmities, for the sake of his Master, and because they honour Him in His servant.

Observe, too, the precept, "Pray ye therefore

the LORD of the Harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." As Ember-week is an institution of the Church, designed to secure the observance of this command, the Lesson is well chosen, as setting forth the origin of that ministry which our own apostles have received from the original twelve.

Again in the Evening Lesson from Jeremiah we have a fierce rebuke and call to penitence. "Shall not I visit . . . for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" As Churchmen and patriots we should hear these things with lowliness and fear. "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches." The Lesson tells us in what alone we should presume to glory.

The Second Lesson is also appropriate to Ember-week, as showing us the "one LORD, one faith, one baptism," which identify the Catholic Church, and the Apostles, pastors, and teachers whom CHRIST has set therein, for the work of the ministry and for the edifying of His Body. It concludes with an exhortation to holiness, and the enumeration of many particulars in which we are tempted to offend; and reminds us that though we have been sealed in baptism, unto the day of redemption, by the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD, there is a possibility and danger of grieving Him forever away

Ember Week in Lent.

Before our Lord ordained the twelve, He passed the night in prayer; and the holy Apostles, before they sent forth Barnabas and Saul, fasted and prayed. This week the Church commands us to do the same; and has provided two most comprehensive prayers "for those who are to be admitted into Holy Orders," which it is our duty, in the closet, at the family altar, and in the house of God, fervently to employ in their behalf.

Let these prayers be uttered in faith and earnest zeal for the glory of God, and the salvation of men; and on the Ember-days (Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday) let all who love the Church keep the fast together. Throughout the world it is observed by many, but in every Church, by, alas, too few! He who faithfully keeps the Ember Seasons will have done more for the Church in his lifetime, than a thousand satirists of the Clergy, or an army of censorious declaimers, setting forth their own ideas of what the ministry should be. Indeed, he has no right to find fault with his spiritual pastors, who has never helped them with the offices which the Church, knowing their peculiar dangers, has provided and enjoined for their assistance and support. How often does the Apostle Paul crave the like benefit from those to whom he ministered! and surely the "earthen

vessels" which bear the treasure of the Gospel now, are as much in need of the prayers of the faithful as he was.

Let the Ember fasts be generalized also, and let prayers be offered for all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons in Christendom, and chiefly for those to whom we are nearest allied. "Pray ye also the LORD of the harvest to send forth labourers into His harvest." Pray for pious and lowly deacons, purchasing to themselves a good degree by St. Stephen's fervour and St. Philip's perseverance. Pray for sacred priests, rightly dividing the Word of GOD; bearing with clean hands the vessels of the LORD; faithfully dispensing His holy Sacraments; continuing instant in prayer; and rejoicing to suffer shame for JESUS' name. And pray for holy bishops, bringing to their work maturity of years; soundness of doctrine; boldness in the faith; a good report of all men, and of the truth itself; dignity and humility combined; purity and zeal and wisdom united; and all those excellent qualities which will enable others, without mocking GOD, to present them for Consecration, as "godly and well-learned men."

The Second Sunday in Lent.

THIS was no common Sunday in old times. In the days of St. Augustine, those who expected to

be baptized at Easter were obliged to give in their names by this day, and were called no longer Catechumens, but Competents, or *Co-Seekers* of Regeneration. The rest of Lent they passed as "valiant tamers of the body." Very suitable to such, is the Introit for this day, which is the famous Psalm (130) *De profundis*, containing the passage, "I look for the LORD; *my soul doth wait for Him;* in His word is my trust." The Collect, which is from the Liturgy of St. Ambrose, is no doubt the same to which Augustine, with his son, and his friend Alypius, responded *Amen*, when they knelt in the Church at Milan, on this day, to be catechized, as seekers of what he calls "the sacrament of that fountain." In that interval of holy preparation, in which these seekers had reason to fear that their experiences might be those of their Divine Master, when He fasted in the wilderness, it was natural to pray "to be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul."

In the Epistle, those "evil thoughts which *most* assault and hurt the soul" are pointed out, in the Apostle's exhortation to purity, and to the sanctification of the body, in honour of Him who hath called us to Holiness. The *lusts of the flesh* are, therefore, the peculiar subject of rebuke this day; and the Bride of CHRIST bids us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness, that she may present us to her LORD without spot or blemish. In the Holy Gospel,

we are encouraged to "continue instant in prayer," and assured by the example of the poor woman of Canaan, that though for a time He may hide His face, and "make as though He heard us not," He will not cast off forever those who cry after Him, and who seek earnestly to be healed of their plague of sin.

In the Lessons from Ezekiel, we note much that is appropriate to the day. In the morning, we must understand the prophet as showing us the reason of the unsatisfactory character of many of our attempts to serve GOD, and the cause of our unanswered prayers and uncomforted confessions. The LORD declares that He will not be inquired of, by those who appear before Him, while they keep *the idols of their heart* as the real objects of their love and worship. Let us search and look, therefore, whether we keep such idols; "for the LORD our GOD is a jealous GOD." In the evening, the prophet earnestly reasons with us, showing the justice of GOD's requirements and dealings; and fully explaining, in what sense GOD does *not* "visit the sins of the fathers upon the children." At the same time, he presents us, in the language of GOD Himself, with one of the most tender and encouraging calls to repentance which the Old Testament contains; and concludes with that solemn assurance of mingled mercy and justice, "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." It is mercy, because it exhibits the sorrow with which GOD will pronounce the sentence *Depart;*

it is judgment, because it implies that, in spite of that sorrow, some shall not escape the second death.

The Second Morning Lesson will be seen to be appropriate to the Lenten Ordaining Sunday; as well as, in several particulars, to the Season in general. The Evening Lesson from the Epistle to the Ephesians, is in excellent harmony with the Epistle for the day, reproving "evil communications" as well as shameful deeds. In contrast with the sinful habits which the Apostle reproves, he places, in this same chapter, the "great Mystery" of Marriage, as so pure and blessed in the sight of GOD, as to be a mystic symbol of CHRIST and the CHURCH. Nor must we overlook the little quotation with which the Lesson favours us, from an ancient hymn of the Primitive Church; for such it seems to have been, being in perfect metre in the original, and rhythmical even in our rendering:—

> "Awake, thou that sleepest:
> And arise from the Dead,
> And CHRIST shall give thee light."

We may reasonably cherish a thought, derived from the appropriateness of this language to the august event, that this is a fragment of one of those Odes which flamed from the burning tongues of the Apostles at Pentecost, as "the Spirit gave them utterance."

The Third Sunday in Lent.

In the Lessons from the Old Testament, Ezekiel is still our prophet; and again he reproaches the Israel of God, for the idols that are set up in the heart. By the history of God's dealings with the Hebrews, the Christian Church is warned to stand in awe of His righteous judgment; and the guilty habit of misinterpreting the word of God is strongly rebuked; especially that species of profaneness which puts by the threatenings of the Lord as mere figures of speech. "The flaming flame shall not be quenched," says the prophet; yet he adds, "Ah, Lord God, they say of me, Doth he not speak parables?" As the whole of the services to-day is designed to remind us of the power of Satan and his angels, which so many men affect to treat as a mere rhetorical idea, it is important to note this rebuke.

The Lesson from the Gospel sets before us our Saviour in the Glory of His Transfiguration. In this sublime Manifestation of the Son of God, the three disciples who were to behold Him in His "agony and bloody sweat," were permitted to gaze upon the unveiled brightness, and express image, of the Father, in the same man Christ Jesus; and to see Moses and Elias—the Law and the Prophets—summoned from the Place of the

Departed to cry, *Hear ye Him!* As we are about to renew the scenes of Calvary and to behold the Son of Mary in His humiliation, we are, in like manner, by the rehearsal of this Lesson, prepared to understand the true character of Him who must suffer such things. It is worthy of remark that Moses and Elijah had both fasted forty days, as prophets, in type of CHRIST'S Lent; and also, that while the one was mysteriously buried by GOD Himself, and the other was translated, both now reappear, proving that they live unto God, and are yet servants of CHRIST. The story of the demoniac boy, and of CHRIST'S mercy to him in delivering him from his spiritual enemies, will be seen to be illustrative of the Collect and the Gospel; and the honour which the LORD puts on "prayer and fasting," harmonizes the sublime narrative of the Transfiguration with the season of Lent.

The Second Evening Lesson concludes the noble Epistle to the Ephesians, with an exposition of the several duties of "all sorts and conditions of men;" and presents to the catechumen a survey of that panoply in which he is to swear a lifelong fight, beneath CHRIST'S banner, against his spiritual foes. St. Paul's enumeration of the divers orders of our invisible enemies, is to be specially considered as illustrating the Collect, and as showing every part of the panoply to be necessary. Let those who have already put on this armour of light, make new resolutions of

wearing it well, until they shall be ready to be offered, and until they can say, with the Apostle, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith."

The common idea of the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel, appears to be that of our spiritual dangers from Satan, and our spiritual sufficiency in CHRIST. By "the Right hand of GOD's Majesty" the Fathers were wont to understand a name of our SAVIOUR; and thus, in the Collect, GOD is invoked to save us from our enemies,—the world, the flesh, and the devil,—by "the Man of His Right hand," CHRIST JESUS. So also in the Epistle, which will be recognised as part of one of the last Sunday's lessons, while the sins of the flesh are specially instanced, we are warned to have no fellowship with those unfruitful works of darkness, which, as the children of the Day, we have renounced. The promise is, that CHRIST shall give light to those who turn from dead works to serve the Living GOD. The Holy Gospel, in like manner, connects with the Second Morning Lesson, and exhibits the Right Hand of GOD's Majesty casting out devils, *by the finger of* GOD; in which expression, perhaps, we ought to recognise a name of the HOLY GHOST, proceeding from the FATHER and the SON So, in the *Veni Creator*, the Church chants, to the glory of the SPIRIT,—

> "In faithful hearts Thou writ'st Thy law,
> *The finger of* GOD's *hand.*"

Here note that the power of CHRIST to destroy the works of the Devil is the subject of each of the Gospels for the first three Sundays in Lent. To-day CHRIST asserts Himself stronger than our great enemy, and able to rescue us: but He also warns us that a child of GOD must ever watch against Satan's efforts to regain possession of a soul which has renounced his service. In Confirmation, we are "sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise," who gives us his seven gifts: but here we are told that Satan has an evil spirit for every good one, and will try to usurp the place we have given to "the seven Spirits of GOD."

The Gospel, moreover, warns us of the necessity of decision in our Christian profession; and of the dangers which follow the first experience of the Christian life, unless the renewed assaults of Satan are prepared for. It concludes with a beatification of all those who "hear the word of GOD and *keep it;*" and, to guard us against superstition, the Son of Mary assures us that such is a higher blessing than that which is peculiar to the Blessed Virgin, His Mother.

The Introit connects with the Epistle, as a supplication for the Light of CHRIST. As the Priest goes up to the Altar, to begin so comfortable a service, let the whole sacramental host remember it is their part as a "roval priesthood" to accompany him with these aspirations from the forty-third Psalm:—"Oh send out *Thy light* and Thy truth, that they may lead me and bring me

unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy dwelling; *and that I may go unto the Altar of God*, even unto the God of my joy and gladness."

The Fourth Sunday in Lent.

We have reached Mid-Lent; and now we turn to the second part of its great design, and consider "Christ our Passover," as we have heretofore learned by the temptation and fasting of Christ, that Satan is our task-master, and the world our Egypt. To-day we are also presented with Christ as our Prophet, next Sunday with Christ our Priest, and then on Palm-Sunday with Christ our King. Further, this Sunday is sometimes called the Sunday of Refection: because, having thus far considered the havoc of sin, we come now to consider its repair; and because the sufficiency of Christ to refresh and satisfy our hunger and thirst after righteousness, is exhibited in the Gospel for this day. It has little of the austere character of the other Sundays in Lent; and its design is the encouragement of catechumens and penitents. To this end, the Epistle is chosen to exhibit the glorious freedom of the Sons of God; and it further expounds the great centre of Christian unity, as existing in that heavenly Jerusalem, of which the Jerusalem that rejected its anointed Prophet and Priest and King has ceased to be a type. The

Gospel relates the miracle at Capernaum, which sets forth the LORD our Righteousness as able to feed alike the souls and bodies of all who follow Him. As this portion of Scripture is twice used as a Gospel, that is to say, here, and on the 25th Sunday after Trinity; and as the similar miracle of the seven loaves is made the Gospel for the 7th Sunday after Trinity, it is but just to suppose, that the Church wishes this divine operation to be seen in all its bearings. This miracle, then, may be well taken in at least two senses. At a future time we may consider it as a proof of the mercy and creative power of our divine LORD, and so a proof of His Godhead. In the present instance we should not merely regard it as a display of omnipotence, but rather with reference to its typical signification. It is to be noted that "the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh;" and, doubtless, it was designed to illustrate the Institution of the Christian Passover, and of the Holy Eucharist, which we are soon to celebrate. "Therefore," to quote St. Augustine, "as we have heard how great this miracle is, let us likewise discover how profound! Let us not alone be charmed with its surface; let us also sound its depths! For what we so much admire without, contains something within."

The Fathers have seen much that is mystical in all parts of the parable. "Twelve baskets," says one, "remained over and above, that each Apostle, bearing a basket on his shoulder, might recognise the ineffable wonder of the miracle." In the

division of the company into different portions, each served by an Apostle, they see a lively image of the Catholic Church, which is one blessed company, in which all partake of that One Bread, which the Apostles received from CHRIST, and have delivered to us.

And as both Epistle and Gospel exhibit the comfortable promises of the LORD, the Collect implores Him to vouchsafe to us relief, in spite of our unworthiness. While all who are lifting up their eyes and hungering for the Easter Feast, to which we now draw near, will find this prayer a consoling one, it will be seen also how appropriate it is to those especially, who are preparing for baptism at Easter; or to lapsers and others, looking for restoration to the privileges of full Communion, which used to be a public solemnity, on Maundy-Thursday.

The 46th Psalm, (*Deus noster refugium,*) which is the Introit, is a blessed expression of confidence and trust, which fully harmonizes with the refreshing services of the day.

The Lesson from the prophet Micah, is "profitable" alike "for reproof and instruction in righteousness;" as it reproaches those who have ungratefully forgotten their obligations to the LORD, and teaches the acceptable service which He requires of those who seek Him. "To walk humbly with GOD," let it be noted, implies humble obedience to all the Institutions of the Gospel. He who refuses to become as a little child at the

feet of JESUS, walks proudly before his GOD. The text is no excuse, therefore, for those who say that CHRIST requires not obedience to His Sacraments and Ordinances.

The Lesson from Habbakuk, is that sublime description of a manifestation of JEHOVAH, commonly called the Theophany. The Transfiguration of our blessed SAVIOUR, which was one of the Lessons last Sunday, must be compared with this; and so we shall the better understand that JESUS is indeed "the brightness of the FATHER'S glory, and the express image of His Person." The concluding verses depict the sure trust of the Christian, in the strength of his salvation, and his consequent independence of outward prosperity or woe.

The second Morning Lesson, anticipates Palm Sunday; and reminds us, thus early, of the way in which the Lamb of GOD was led to the slaughter; as also of the awful retribution which came upon Jerusalem, for that consummation of the sins of its people. In the evening, we begin to read the Epistle to the Philippians; omitting the second chapter, however, till Good Friday, when it occurs as the Evening Lesson. A portion of it moreover occurs as the Epistle on Palm Sunday.

An Anthem for this Sunday might be made of the words: (Numb. xiii. 23,) "They came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare

it between two upon a staff, . . . saying, The land floweth with milk and honey, and this is the fruit of it."

Passion Sunday.

While the Israelite in the desert, was dying of the plague, it was natural that he should forget every thing but his horrible condition and disease: but when Moses lifted up the serpent, and bade him look, and be saved, self was comparatively forgotten. He looked in faith, and was healed. So while the penitent in the former weeks of Lent, has probed and examined his heart, and bewailed his sin and uncleanness, he has been chiefly concerned with his own wretchedness and unworthiness of relief: but when to-day, the Church begins to set before him Christ crucified as his cure, it is time to look unto Him and be saved—to cast our burden upon the Lord,—to behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow, which is done unto Him!

To-day is called Passion Sunday, because the Services begin to relate the story of our Lord's sufferings and death. The Atonement is pre-eminently the theme of this day. Christ is exhibited as our Great High-Priest; and from now to Easter, the Lamb of God, dumb before His shearers, is the engrossing object of wonder, of worship and of love.

The Services of this day will strike the attentive worshipper, as singularly harmonious throughout. They are full of the name that is honey in the mouth, and music in the ear, *mel in ore, melos in aure*. The first Morning Lesson, is that affecting prophecy of Haggai, in which JESUS is promised as the "Desire of all nations." When Zerubbabel, and Joshua, and the residue of the people that had returned from captivity, (remembering the first temple, and its glory,) beheld the second temple,—it was as nothing in their eyes. It lacked the Ark, and we read elsewhere that they wept, at the humiliating contrast. But the word of the LORD came unto them to give them comfort, with the promise that the glory of the latter house should be greater than that of the former! How so? Because, said the LORD, the silver and the gold are mine, and if I so choose, it may be made more beautiful with things like these. But the true meaning of my promise is, that a better glory than that of gold and silver shall shine in this temple; the Desire of all nations shall stand here; in this latter house the true Ark of the Covenant shall be seen; here will I give peace, for the Prince of Peace shall come to this temple

The Second Lesson therefore begins with the story of the widow's mite, showing how He who claimed the silver and the gold as His, could adorn the temple more, with a pious heart, which was only able to give a farthing. Yet it rehearses the admiration of the Apostles at the temple, as

"adorned with goodly stones," for Herod had adorned it, even with gold. But to show that this was not the true fulfilment of the prophecy, the LORD declares that all this is destined to be overthrown. Finally we observe that "in the daytime He was teaching *in the temple.*" Ah, here was the glory of the latter house; GOD manifest in the flesh was there,—and its glory was greater than that which the Queen of the South had fainted to behold!

The Epistle is based upon this fulfilment. It begins, "*Christ being come,*" and declares His power to give us peace with GOD, as a High-Priest of good things. The Levitical Sacrifices, as a great system, illustrative of the one Sacrifice of the Lamb of GOD, which alone explains them are then expounded, in connection with the priesthood of CHRIST. And then, the Holy Gospel is a touching exhibition of the blindness of the Jews, to this glory which had been the joy of Abraham, and the desire of all nations. It exhibits the LORD of Glory "enduring that contradiction of sinners," which is elsewhere spoken of. They said, "He had a devil!" They impudently looked into His face, scanned His features, and pronounced Him not yet *fifty* years old:—proof that He looked older than He really was. In reply He assumes the great name of the self-existing One—I AM. Then they took up stones to stone Him, and JESUS *went out of the temple!* So the glory departed, and Ichabod was its name, and desolation its award.

The Introit is Psalm fifty-fourth; but it is an ancient custom to omit the Introit and the Gloria Patri, on this day; and not to sing the latter again till Easter Sunday.

Of the Collect it is only necessary to say, that with the Epistle and Gospel, it remains as it stands in the ancient Sacramentaries, for this Sunday. The Churches of Western Christendom, would have a common service on this day, (though we alone might enjoy it, in the vulgar tongue,) had not the Latin Churches, by perpetual innovations, sacrificed the ancient offices, in many parts of Europe, introducing novel and inferior ones, more conformed to the fables of modern Rome.

In the Evening, it may be well to observe two texts in the First Lesson, as peculiarly suited to the season. The first is, "there shall be a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness;" by which we are reminded of the water and the blood, which flowed from the cleft side of the Redeemer. The other is, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against *the man that is my fellow*, saith the LORD of HOSTS!" This text, it will be remembered, our SAVIOUR applied to Himself expressly, and thus, "thought it not robbery to be equal with GOD," *the man* that is GOD'S *fellow!* How, except by the Church's doctrines of the consubstantiality of the SON with the FATHER, and of the Mystery of the Incarnation, is such language to be interpreted?

The second Lesson is happily in keeping. The

sacrifice of all for CHRIST,—Justification through His merits alone,—the fellowship of His sufferings, and the power of His resurrection,—these are its themes. It glories in "the Cross of CHRIST," and concludes with a fervent exhortation, and a promise of the Resurrection.

It will be a happy thing if the Morning Prayers this day begin with the sentence, "the LORD is in His *holy temple*," in anticipation of the Lessons, and the Altar-Serv'ce.

Oh, how amiable would be the tabernacles of the LORD, if only all kept holy-day in the spirit, and with the understanding of the inimitable Service of the Church, this day! From now till Easter the devout Churchman enjoys a soul-full of spiritual meat. He goes in and out, and finds pasture, with the good Shepherd; and beholds, in all the glory of His wonderful humiliation, the patient Lamb of GOD.

Palm Sunday.

"REJOICE greatly, O daughter of Zion! behold thy king cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." With these words for the Anthem, the Church, in many places, annually celebrates the day, on which this ancient prophecy was fulfilled. It was on the first day of the week

in which He suffered, that our LORD entered the Holy City in this way. The multitude, by a divine influence, obeying the prophet, greeted His approach with hosannas, and strewed their garments and waved palm-branches before Him. This beautiful and striking event, in the life of our SAVIOUR, viewed in connection with the scenes that immediately followed,—the *hosanna* of Sunday, contrasted with the *away-with-him* of Friday,—has taken deep and mysterious hold upon the hearts and the imaginations of men. And though our ancient Church, in the reign of the Sixth Edward, laid aside the procession of palm-bearers, which before that had marked this day, its name of Palm-Sunday still remains in good usage, and its associations still brighten with melancholy light, the sombre solemnities of the week before us. Some few there may be, who bear a green sprig in their hands to Church, as a silent, though expressive memorial of Him who disdained not to accept the same tribute from His Apostles; and we learn from an English writer that owing to their former general use, in this way, "the catkins of the sallow or large-leaved willow, which are now in full bloom, are still called *palms*, by the country-people of England." It is better, however, that we can think as we go to Church, in the bland spring sunshine, how, as at this time, and on such a day, our blessed LORD came into Jerusalem, to die for our sins. We can identify ourselves with the scene, as it was once, in reality

passing. Here is our gracious Master, who has gone about doing good so long, approaching on His meek beast, the City that "slayeth the prophets and stoneth them that are sent unto her." The multitude are going up to the Passover; and rejoicing to get a glimpse of the marvellous Nazarene, and trusting that He is about to exert His miraculous power for the worldly restoration of His country, they have plucked down boughs from the trees, and are laying even their raiment beneath His feet. He, the while, rides on in silence, for great is the travail of His soul, and His time is come. It is the day when the shepherds are driving the lambs into Jerusalem to be sacrificed at the Passover; the highways are full of the victims; but lo! here is our very Paschal Lamb led by His own love to the slaughter, and like the sheep before the shearer, opening not his mouth.

With such meditations, let us employ our time till the Service begins. Then let us endeavour to do more than those who merely cast their vesture in the way, in obedience to the sentence, "Rend your hearts, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD." Perhaps, instead of the Psalms for the day of the month, we shall have the *third*, or the *sixth* Selection, which will assist us to lay our hearts in the dust before the King of Glory.

Let us remark, in the First Lesson, how mysteriously this solemn week was predicted to Daniel, as that in which "Messiah should be cut

off, but not for Himself." In the Second Lesson, let us observe the partial fulfilment of one of the prophecies read in the former lesson, in the act of the woman who came with the alabaster box to "anoint the Most Holy." And as we listen to the fearful details of the Passion, as they are given by St. Matthew, in this Lesson, and in the Holy Gospel, let us resolve that, forsaking, as far as possible, all worldly thoughts, we will devote this hallowed week to devout meditations on the cross, and to ardent adoration of the Crucified.

The Introit is Psalm 61st. But Psalm 118 is even more appropriate, especially from the 25th verse; for these are the words of the Hosanna which was shouted before CHRIST Himself on this day. In obedience to ancient custom, there are no Introits appointed for the remaining days of the week, until Good Friday. The Collect, although it is the ancient Latin one for the day, has been delicately improved in the process of translation.

The Gospel, as we have hinted, is the narrative of the Passion, according to the first Evangelist; and the Epistle is comprehensive of the whole spirit of the week. Sublime as that glorious passage is at any time, it never affects us as it does in connection with the overpowering solemnities of Palm Sunday, and as associated with the scenes about to be renewed during the week. It compresses the whole Gospel into such a condensation of language; it so vividly pictures the Incarnation, the Passion, and the Ascension

together; it so feelingly gives utterance to our natural emotions, that we spontaneously bow soul and body when we hear the words of the Apostle:—"He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, *even the death of the Cross:* Wherefore GOD also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of JESUS every knee shall bow, . . . and every tongue should confess that JESUS CHRIST is LORD, to the glory of GOD the FATHER."

Let it be observed that in both the Epistle and Gospel the Royalties of CHRIST are strikingly displayed. CHRIST, as the King of Israel, is the burden of the day. JESUS was to be rejected after a full declaration of His true character; He was the King of the Jews, and as such he displayed Himself, in His official Advent to Jerusalem, and the Temple, on Palm Sunday. But His kingdom was not of this world.

The First Lesson, at Evening Prayer, contains the prediction of CHRIST'S coming to His Temple, to purify it; for it was on Palm Sunday that He scourged the money-changers, and the buyers and sellers, in the Court of the Gentiles. It also contains the promise of Elias, which the Jews used as a pretext for rejecting CHRIST; and a clear prediction of the final Judgment which is to come upon all who copy the Jews in their hardness of heart. In the Second Lesson the Great Melchizedek is exhibited—the Eternal Priest, and the Eternal King

The events of this day were, in brief, as follows. Our Lord, after reaching the Temple, healed many of the sick, blind, and lame, and graciously accepted the hosannas of the children. St. Philip announced to our Lord that certain Greek proselytes, who could not enter the interior of the Temple, were anxious to see Him, and He therefore went to them, in the Court of the Gentiles. Here He predicted the Conversion of the Gentiles, as the glorious harvest of His own death and resurrection; and as He uttered a prayer to the Father, He was answered by a miraculous voice, which the people mistook for thunder. Our Lord further fulfilled the prophecy, in clearing the Temple of the profane traffickers, by whom it was polluted, and in so doing He seems to have been miraculously sustained, and also to have had the consciences and sympathies of the people in His favour. In this, He gave a foretaste of the Last Day, and showed us that His mercy does not annihilate His Judgment. He also showed how easily He might have overcome His enemies, and even seized the government, had such been His motive. St. John asserts that many of the chief priests did, in fact, believe on Him, but they were afraid to confess Him openly. At evening, the Holy Saviour returned to Bethany, with the twelve, and was probably the guest of the beloved Lazarus, and his pious sisters. On the previous evening, Mary had anointed Him "for His burial:" as it were applying to Him the language of the

Bride, in the Canticles, "Because of the savour of Thy good ointments—Thy name is as ointment poured forth—therefore do the Virgins love Thee."

The Holy Week.

Monday.

We are drawing nearer and nearer to the cross; and do not our hearts burn within us in the way? To those who really know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, what a season is this! The Master calls us not servants, but friends: we are not living in the nineteenth century, nor in the uttermost parts of the earth. We are carried back to the Holy Land, and to the Passover which Jesus desired to eat with His disciples. We are not hearing—we are *living* the history of our Redemption. Happy are they who duly celebrate these Mysteries, acquainting themselves more and more with Him whose countenance was marred more than the sons of men, but Who is, to us, the chief among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely!

How sublimely the Epistle for this morning opens! how augustly it ushers in the glorious sufferer coming to redeem His people! Whether it be read in the quiet country church, or in the spacious choir of the cathedral, it is everywhere

the same; yet every year more significant, and more precious to the soul: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength; I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save!"

The whole of this prophecy, read in immediate connection with Good Friday and Palm Sunday, strikes us as a happy illustration of the sagacity with which our Holy Mother ministers to us the rich bounties of the word of GOD. The Gospel makes its mark as an experience. We gain living associations with different Scriptures, and learn their interpretation, as a child learns language, not in harsh tasks from a mere master, but in delightful and winning intercourse with a mother, who day by day adapts her discourse to our growing powers, and impresses truth on our minds, as it were, by example, rather than by direct indoctrination. Hence this chapter gets its meaning, in our minds, from its place in the Liturgy. We care not for what mere critics or barren literalists may fancy to be the sense. To us it is full of the SAVIOUR; and whenever we see it in our Bible, we remember how it is wont to sound in our ears, in the week of the Redeemer's Passion. Delightful art, by which the pure milk and the rich meat of the word are thus duly dispensed, in their season, to the children of CHRIST'S Bride! Some have objected that this prophecy speaks of a day of vengeance, whereas it was a day of suffering But

let us reflect that it is a highly lyrical poem, wherein the Passion is viewed as that contest with the powers of darkness, in which Satan's head was finally bruised. It was also a day of terrible vengeance to the Jews; and the scourging of those who profaned the Temple must be regarded as a foretaste of the terrible retribution which afterwards visited Jerusalem, and made that temple a heap of stones.

The Church has taken care that each of the Evangelists should be heard this week, in his narrative of the Passion. So, yesterday, the Holy Gospel was taken from St. Matthew; and to-day St. Mark is begun. Though we do not include in our plan, any commentary on the Scripture itself, yet we will note what is peculiar in the Gospel, as contributing to Liturgical completeness. The Gospel of St. Mark is traditionally ascribed to the patronage of St. Peter; and there is little doubt that it was composed by his direction and care, although under inspiration of the Holy Ghost. As St. Peter's fall and repentance, therefore, are an important part of the tremendous drama before us, his account of that transaction, with which the Holy Gospel concludes to-day, must be heard with peculiar interest. It s his confession. Let it be remarked, then, that while the other Evangelists seem more slightly to detail his guilt, and more fully to record his penitence, he, on the other hand, gives his shame in all its baseness; and when he comes to speak of his repentance,

gives himself the least credit that is possible. Other Gospels say, "he went out and wept *bitterly*." St. Peter only says, "And when he thought thereon *he wept*." How eloquent the simplicity—how touching the silence—of one, who in two words relates the hours of anguish, the bitterness of which language could not describe! St. Peter seems to leave it with GOD: to say—I will not tell *how* I repented; LORD, Thou knowest my groaning; put my tears into Thy bottle, and let the world see them at that day!

It may at first strike us that the series of Lessons from Daniel, which the Church reads this week, is not so appropriate as some other selection might be; but it must be remembered that Daniel, who is called in Scripture "the man greatly beloved," is in many points like unto St. John, "the beloved disciple;" and the prophecies which he was favoured to give, were peculiarly "the testimony of JESUS." Thus in the Lesson for the day, the prophet's description of the Son of GOD, whom he beheld in a vision, is remarkably like that of St. John, who beheld the same unchangeable LORD, in the Isle of Patmos. Thus CHRIST is set before us, as the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; the LORD alike of the Prophets and Apostles; the great I AM, "Who was, and Who is, and Who is to come." The description of His vesture, represents the Great High-Priest of the Church. He was "clothed in linen;" surpliced in His bright raiments, as our glorious Melchizedek,

about to offer Himself, as a lamb without blemish, for the sins of the whole world. It finely accords, therefore, with the Epistle—"this that is glorious in His apparel?"

In the Second Morning Lesson, this gracious High-Priest, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, condescends to talk with us, and to strengthen us, as He did the prophet Daniel. How choicely the Church tells o'er her treasures, and counts and weighs the parting words of comfort, which fell from her divine LORD, ere He left her, eighteen hundred years ago!

In the Evening Lesson from Hosea, besides the allusion in the first verse to the Passover, when "Israel came out of Egypt," observe the text, "I drew them with cords of a man, with bonds of love." This relates to CHRIST'S humanity, and to His redeeming Love.

In old time it was customary to rehearse, on every day of the Passion Week, the events of that day; the more forcibly to impress the minds of the people with the history of their redemption. In this way, the great mysteries of our faith were solemnly renewed and commemorated annually. But a perversion of the original simplicity was introduced, and the clergy, in an ignorant age, invented scenic representations of the events; one of which (the feet-washing) has been retained until very lately, even in our reformed communion. Thus grew up those dramas called MYSTERIES, or Scripture plays, which in time became painfully

profane. But our object in mentioning this is to suggest the happy effect of the Mysteries of Passion Week, if only preserved in their original form. The pastor with his flock, the mother with her children, can still rehearse day by day, this week, what JESUS did on each day, for their souls. Thus will the Gospel story sink deeper in the heart, and Passion Week and Easter be, each year, more perfectly realized, and more earnestly desired.

Thus, the mysteries celebrated to-day would be the morning-walk from Bethany; the cursing of the barren fig-tree, as a symbol of the Jewish nation; the second cleansing of the Temple; and the return at nightfall to the Mount of Olives. As it was dark, in all probability, the disciples, as they passed by, failed to observe that the fig-tree was already withered.

Tuesday.

THE events of this day, as given in the Harmonies of the Gospels, are very striking. As our LORD, with His disciples, passed the fig-tree, on their way to the city, they were appalled to see that it had withered away so soon. It was not only a type of the Jewish nation, but also of the traitor Judas.

In the Temple, our Blessed SAVIOUR spake many

of His parables, on this day, and among others that of the vineyard and the wicked husbandmen. The hearers saw its bearings, and were, apparently, much affected by it, for the time. As He left the Temple, He was led, by the pride which the disciples showed in its magnificence, to foretell its speedy ruin; and, seated on the Mount of Olives, He further enlarged on this as a type of the end of all things. As the sun was setting, He foretold His hour as fast approaching. Thus, our LORD today abandoned the Temple forever to its fate; and the Jewish people were solemnly given over to their own devices, in punishment for their rejection of the Messiah.

The Epistle is well suited to the day in which JESUS "endured such contradiction of sinners;" and the Gospel concludes the narrative of St. Mark. The Lesson from Daniel is a narrative of events which were fulfilled before CHRIST came; and the fulfilling of which was a prelude to His fulfilling of all prophecy, in Himself. The Lesson from St. John contains our SAVIOUR'S parting words to his disciples. In the Evening Lesson, from Hosea, we should note the text, "And I, that am the LORD thy GOD from the land of Egypt, will yet make thee to dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of the solemn feasts." In the preceding verses, "the balances of deceit" seem to allude to the sin of Judas, and the priests, in valuing and selling the Holy Lamb of GOD.

Wednesday.

Of "the Mysteries" celebrated this day, the conspicuous and absorbing one, is the sale of "Him that was valued" for thirty pieces of silver.

The Epistle, therefore, explains why it was necessary to the new Covenant, that Jesus should die; and, as to-morrow will tell us how Jesus instituted the "New Testament in His blood;" so, to-day rehearses how Moses with the blood of calves and goats, ordained the first Testament, with the words, "this is the blood of the Testament, which God hath enjoined unto you."

The Holy Gospel commences St. Luke's pictorial narrative of the sublime events of the Passion. Observe, in this Gospel, the fact that our Lord was *blindfolded*, when they smote Him. It has been well remarked, that, but for this minute fact, thus mentioned, we should have been unable to see the point of St. Matthew's story; for that Evangelist merely states that "they smote Him with the palms of their hands, saying, *Prophesy unto us thou* Christ, *who is he that smote Thee?*" Thus it is, however, that the more closely we inspect the Gospels, the more we shall be convinced of their artless and simple truthfulness. Doubtless, other things not easily explained, as we now read, would be very clear, if we understood all the customs and peculiarities of the times and places mentioned. Thus, there is an apparent difficulty

about the cock-crowings, which entirely disappears on the close comparison of the most learned critics. The scarlet robe of one Evangelist is the same as the purple robe of the other; for the colour intended is a glaring combination of these dyes, well described by St. Luke as a gorgeous robe.

In the Lesson from Daniel, "the glorious holy mountain" is Calvary, as part of the mountain on which Jerusalem was built. The Lesson from St. John narrates the occasion of the conspiracy against JESUS, and of the effort to find a betrayer. It also relates the remarkable prophecy of Caiaphas, which "he spake not of himself." The Lesson from Hosea, read at Evening Prayer, contains the promise of the SAVIOUR, (to be fulfilled as at Easter,) "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction."

Maundy-Thursday.

THIS day is so called as being *Dies Mandati*, the Day of the Mandate; that is to say, of the command, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

This day, the Church's gates are opened wide, that the truly penitent may came back to the SAVIOUR, and begin anew to sup with JESUS, according to His precepts. The warning to the Easter Communion is appropriately read after the

Holy Gospel, and possibly that very solemn one which is provided in case the pastor has a negligent flock. Alas! in these days, what pastor sees even the greater part of his adult flock zealous and faithful in attendance on the Holy Eucharist? To-day, all lukewarm believers are admonished. If there be those, therefore, who have allowed the world or their own carnal will to withdraw them from the altar, let them return this day, in dust and ashes, and forget their Redeemer no longer. Or, if there be those who labour under the Church's discipline, to-day is the day of restoration; let them ask of those who bear the keys of the Kingdom, and, if truly penitent, they may again be admitted to the fold.

We commemorate this day the Institution of the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist. The Morning Prayer, therefore, should begin with the prophetic sentence from Malachi; and with reference to the penitential character of the day, there might be appropriately added that from the Psalter, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit." The Seventh Selection of Psalms will often be found more appropriate than the Psalms for the day, as it contains Psalms which all relate, more or less, to the Table of the Lord, the Christian Altar. "Oh, taste and see how gracious the Lord is," is, in fact an ancient selection, for use at the Lord's Supper.

The First Lesson is in keeping with the season, as containing a sublime prediction of the Resurrec-

tion. This promise is peculiarly appropriate to this day of the Sacrament, as harmonizing with the SAVIOUR'S pledge, "Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

We commemorate also, this day, the washing of the disciples' feet; and so the Second Lesson tells how He Who thought it not robbery to be equal with GOD, took upon Him the form of a servant, and girded Himself with a towel, and condescended to wash the feet of the twelve; yea, even the feet (that were "swift to shed blood") of one about to betray Him.

The Evening Lesson, from Jeremiah, contains the promise of that *new covenant* which, on this Evening, JESUS made, in His flesh and blood. Also, it contains a beautiful promise of the Resurrection, especially applicable to the case of children dying in the LORD.

The Epistle is St. Paul's narrative, as he received it from the LORD, of the Institution of the new covenant, and contains his commentary thereon, and his exhortation to the worthy reception of the same. The Holy Gospel concludes St. Luke's narration of the Passion. If the Holy Communion is not celebrated to-day, one of the Exhortations should be read in full, after the Gospel, bidding to the Easter Communion.

As we behold the Paschal Moon this Evening, making bright with her pale beams the scenes of the SAVIOUR'S sufferings, let us think of Geth-

semane, and of our LORD's mysterious agony, on which the same Paschal Moon, presumed to shine; and let us profitably meditate, with shame and contrition, on the profane retinue that came with lanterns and with staves, and laid hands on Him Whom His own familiar friend saluted with a traitorous kiss.

It may be interesting to mention that, with reference to the precept, "ye ought also to wash one another's feet," the kings of England were long accustomed to perform this ceremony, washing the feet of a number of beggars, in public, at Whitehall Chapel, after morning prayer, this day. King James II. was the last who did this in person; but at least as late as 1731 the Archbishop of York officiated instead of the Sovereign. When the ceremony ceased we cannot say precisely; but a relic of it is still preserved in the annual procession at the Chapel Royal, and the distribution of loaves and fishes to a number of poor persons corresponding numerically with the years of the Sovereign's age. Bags of silver are likewise distributed in the same way. All this is very well; but let us not forget the spiritual import of what JESUS did,—teaching us by His example, condescension, humility and brotherly love.

Good Friday.

THIS is the great and awful day that commemorates the Redeemer's sufferings. Let us keep it in solemn fasting and humiliation, for our sins, alas! were thorns to His glorious and immaculate Head, and nails to His holy and venerable hands.

The Service begins, of course, with the most deeply penitential of the sentences, and the *Venite* is read without music, or exchanged for the Anthem which is provided to be read with a Selection, instead of the Proper Psalms. Yet the Proper Psalms can hardly be spared, the 22d being the most minute description of the Passion that is given in Holy Writ; and the 54th containing that oblation of Himself which was made by the Blessed Word, ere yet He was Incarnate of the Virgin. The First Lesson is the narrative of the typical offering of Isaac; who, bearing the wood on his shoulder, as JESUS bore His cross, asks, "Where is the lamb?" and receives the answer from the Father of the faithful, "GOD will provide Himself a lamb, my son." When it is remembered that it was on the same Mount Moriah that JESUS, in fulness of time, was seen bearing His cross, like Isaac, the amazing beauty of the Lesson will be felt. Of this event, the prophecy is explicit:— "In the Mount of the LORD it shall be seen."

It must be observed, moreover, that the whole transaction was designed to teach Abraham, and the faithful through him, that the love which he bore to his son, "his only son," was only a faint type of that of the FATHER to His well-beloved. St. Paul tells us that the unbinding of Isaac was a signal type of the Resurrection, and that Abraham acted as he did, sustained by strong faith that GOD was able to raise him from the dead Thus we see that the patriarchs knew and believed more of the Gospel than is usually supposed The Second Lesson begins St. John's narrative of the Passion, and closes with the astounding declaration that he whom the Jews chose to release instead of CHRIST, was, like all that ever came before Him, a "thief and a robber!"

For the Introit is sung a passage from the 22d Psalm, "My GOD, my GOD, look upon me." The Collects are three: the first commemorative of JESUS; the second a supplication for the faithful and the third, (after the example of CHRIST,) a prayer for His murderers:—those infidels who crucify Him afresh, as well as the pagans who know Him not; those Turks and Heretics who deny His power and Godhead; and those unhappy Jews who wander the Earth, as living witnesses of the hour when their fathers cried, "His blood be on us and on our children." These Collects are very ancient; and the same, or similar ones, are referred to by St. Augustine; though the introduction of the word "Turks" must be comparatively modern.

The Epistle is a majestic passage from the Epistle to the Hebrews, explanatory of those blessed effects of the Redeemer's Incarnation and Passion, which, in spite of its fearful commemorations, has gained for this day the name of *Good* Friday. The HOLY GOSPEL is the exceedingly full and tender narrative of that eye-witness who alone of the Apostles clung to the cross, and succoured the Mother of our LORD, when the sword pierced through her heart. Of course we shall spare all comment on such a Gospel; which, after the other three have been read during the week, seems to be filled up with the accumulated pathos of the whole, and, like a cup of trembling, to overflow. After the words, *It is finished*, and again after the words, *He bowed His head and gave up the Ghost*—a Clergyman who reads with feeling generally makes an impressive pause. It concludes with a remarkable exposition of two prophecies, showing how minute are the details of the Hebrew Scriptures in their allusions to CHRIST. The Paschal Lamb was to be carefully slain, and no bone was to be broken: and Zechariah had said, "They shall look on me, whom they have pierced." Now we learn that both of these matters, the ordinance and the saying, were prospective, and sought their fulfilment in the one moment, when, after the death of JESUS, the executioner forbore to break His legs, but a soldier thrust his spear into the side of the Blessed Body.

It may at first appear strange that there is no

Proper Preface at the Trisagion, for so solemn a day. But the reason is that, except for the sick, the HOLY EUCHARIST is never properly consecrated on this Fast. As the day itself is a mournful commemoration, and as the Eucharistic Feast little comports with the deep abasement of our humiliation on such a day, there appears every reason of congruity for this omission.

At Evening Service we shall find relief in the feeling that, with our Master, "the worst is o'er;" and like the holy Marys, "sitting over against the sepulchre," our meditations will tenderly linger around the tomb of JESUS. In the whole course of the year there is no Lesson which comes into its place more effectively than this Evening's Lesson from Isaiah, so full of pathos and beauty, in itself, and so minutely descriptive of the events of the Passion. No one, on hearing it, can doubt that Isaiah "spake beforehand of the sufferings of CHRIST, and of the glory that should follow." One almost wishes that the Second Lesson had been the story of Philip and the Eunuch; and yet, from long association, we should hardly consent to part with the affecting exhortation of St. Paul, which is repeated from Sunday's Epistle.

Oh, let us keep this fast with the true spirit of the publican, and of the repentant thief; and He who was crucified "shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied."

Easter Even.

WHERE anthems are sung, the proper anthem for this day is, "My flesh shall rest in hope: for why? Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell, neither shalt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

Proper Psalms for the day will be found in the Sixth Selection, which contains the *De Profundis*, as well as the *Beati quorum*—the latter having especial reference to Baptism.

The First Lesson at Morning Prayer is chosen with reference to a text which, as compared with the Epistle for the day, was always regarded by the Fathers as referring to the *Descent into Hell*, and "the preaching to spirits in prison." "By the blood of thy covenant," says the prophet, "I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water." The Second Lesson relates how JESUS was "with the rich in His death." At Evening Prayer, the First Lesson refers to the precept of the Passover. The Second is designed especially for the comfort and instruction of the catechumens about to be baptized at the close of the Lesson. "Let us come boldly," is a warrant for their assurance in approaching the font.

From the customs of the early Church, which protracted the service of this day, through the night, till Easter morning it still traditionally

retains the name of Easter-even. It is, of all vigils, the most absorbing and delightful. As for the "Man of sorrows," with Him the pain is over; the battle is fought, His victory is won, His soul has gone to Paradise. We commemorate His mysterious DESCENT INTO HELL, with the happy spirit of the repentant thief. Meantime His dead body reposes in St. Joseph's tomb; the seal is on the stone; the guards are pacing around it; the Paschal moon is gleaming on their helmets and spears. The Church, with fragrant spices of remembrance, keeps vigil, like Magdalene and Mary. At the Introit, therefore, she, as it were, forgets that she is *commemorating*, and rather *anticipates*, the Resurrection of her LORD. How expressively she describes the condition of His body, in the sealed sepulchre, as she sings the *Domine, Deus!* (Psalm 88:)

"Free among the dead, like unto them that are wounded and lie in the grave, who are out of remembrance and are cut away from Thy hand!

"Dost Thou show wonders among the dead? or shall the dead rise up again, and praise Thee?

"Shall Thy wondrous works be known in the dark; and Thy righteousness in the land where all things are forgotten?"

As we have heard this sung on Easter-Eve, we have almost been able to identify ourselves with those who, with such despairing words, rested on the Sabbath, according to the commandment, and looked for the morning that they might hasten to the tomb, eighteen hundred years ago!

As we are "buried with CHRIST in baptism," so Easter-Eve has from time immemorial been the great baptizing day; on which, especially, those catechumens who have been prepared during Lent are brought to the laver of Regeneration. To this custom the beautiful Collect for the day has especial reference; and a modern German scholar has suggested that the apostle refers to this primitive ordinance when he speaks of those who were "baptized for the dead;" that is, for a dead CHRIST. Baptized at the Passover into the death of JESUS, what is their hope, if there be no reality in His Resurrection?

The Epistle is singularly appropriate; containing the doctrines of the *Descent into Hell;* of *Regeneration* in baptism; and of the *Resurrection* of JESUS CHRIST for our justification. In the Services of this day it seems appropriate that the two Creeds should be used alternately; one as containing the Descent into Hell, and the other the language, "I believe in one baptism for the remission of sins."

The HOLY GOSPEL embalms the name of him who embalmed the world's Redeemer and laid Him in his own new tomb. It recounts the interment of JESUS: the vigil of the two Marys who sat "over against the sepulchre;" the testimony of the chief priests to CHRIST'S prediction that He would rise again; and the sealing of the stone, and the setting of the watch. So, then, they have made it "as sure as they can;" go your

way from such a service, and come early on the morrow. Let us see what Pilate's guard, and their seal upon the stone, shall avail against the promise of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life. The holy women have prepared their spices, and are unconsciously giving a new meaning to the language of the Canticles:—"I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till He please. . . . I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and the hill of frankincense, until the day break, and the shadows flee away."

Easter Day.

CHRIST is risen! Such is the shout which encircles the earth, as this morning's sun wakes up the world! To-day ten thousand temples are crowded; ten thousand altars spread; ten thousand voices sing, "CHRIST our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast!" In many places the old custom is retained of decorating the font and altar with flowers, emblems of the resurrection, and of our faith in the promises—Isaiah xxvi. 19, and Hosea xiv. 5. These flowers, after the solemnities of the day, are sent to the sick, and others who have not been permitted, by Providence, to visit the temple. Surely, if ever it

is right to use such demonstrations of joy as the disciples did of old, when they plucked down branches of the trees, and threw their robes in the way, it is on this festival, which Prophecy itself has proclaimed to us, in the words, "This is the day which the LORD hath made: we will rejoice and be glad in it."

Early, while it is yet dark, in some places, the singers go about the streets with the song,—

"Vain the stone, the watch, the seal,
CHRIST has burst the gates of Hell!"

By permission of the venerable Presiding Bishop of our Church, the writer, when a presbyter of his Diocese, was long accustomed to assemble his flock, for worship, at sunrise, on Easter day, and to use a special service, which received the Bishop's approbation. First was said the LORD'S Prayer and the Collect for the day; and then, after the versicles, (*O Lord, open Thou our lips, etc.*,) and the Easter Anthem, were said, or sung, Psalms, (16, 81, 84, 110,) with Glorias.

The Lesson was Revelation, the Fifth Chapter, followed by the *Jubilate*, and the Nicene Creed. A brief pastoral salutation was followed by the carol,

"CHRIST our LORD is risen to-day."

And the Service closed with Collects, (those for the First and Second Sundays after Easter, for Easter Even, for the Feasts of St. Thomas, and SS. Philip

and James,) and the concluding prayer in the "Burial of the Dead." This order is suggested for family prayer, on Easter-day, where no special service is authorized; but the regular Morning Prayer may be said at sunrise, in all churches The opening sentence will be, "The LORD is in His Holy Temple," which we must understand of His restoration to His Church; or else, "From the rising of the sun," alluding to the fact that on this day "incense and a pure oblation" are offered *in every place* where as yet the name of JESUS has sounded. Then follow, as usual, the confession and absolution, and LORD'S Prayer. And then, at the prayer, "O LORD, open Thou our lips," bursts forth the Anthem, "CHRIST is risen from the dead and become the first-fruits of them that slept." The words "CHRIST, our Passover, etc.," and the exhortation, "Let us keep the feast," show that the Christian Passover is an Apostolic Institution. St. Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians, at Easter, and hence the pertinency of his appeal (I. Cor. v. 7) to them as "unleavened"—that is, keeping the days of unleavened bread. The Jewish Christians seem to have used unleavened bread at the LORD'S Supper, but the Apostle bids them to be spiritually unleavened. Year after year, as this glorious strain begins, we find ourselves wishing it may not be over too soon,—and then, as it dies away, regretting that a year must pass ere we hear it again. Let us reflect that pos-

sibly we shall hear it, and sing it to the glory of the risen REDEEMER, never again on earth!

Then follow the Proper Psalms; which are prophecies of the Resurrection, collected from the Psalter, and which, though written ages before CHRIST came, are still the best poetical descriptions of His history.

The First Lesson narrates the Institution of the Paschal Feast, which took place more than three thousand years ago, and was enjoined to be kept forever; as it has been, in Jewish shadow or in Christian substance, ever since, and as to time's end it ever shall be, as sure as the moon, which GOD set for signs and for seasons, comes annually to her Paschal maturity. How suggestive the thought, as we thus read the original warrant for this festival, that in our generation we have risen up to observe it also, and to pass it to our posterity, saying, when our children ask, "What mean ye by this service?"—"It is the LORD'S Passover."

How expressive, in the Te Deum which follows, is the strain,—"When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of Heaven to all believers!"

In the Second Lesson, contrary to the usual rule for Morning Prayer, we read an Epistle instead of a Gospel; and this is done that the fervent Apostle of the Gentiles may be heard, exhorting us "that, like as CHRIST was raised up from the

dead by the glory of the FATHER, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Then, if the *Jubilate* be sung, how appropriate its burthen, "Be joyful, all ye lands!" Or if the *Benedictus* follows, how new and fresh a meaning is given by the day to the passage, "He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath *raised up* a mighty Salvation for us, in the house of His servant David."

It is strictly rubrical to conclude the Morning Prayers without the Litany, which may be said afterwards, at any time before Evening Prayer The desire of every communicant to present himself at the Altar, on this festival, in obedience to the recognised duty of partaking always at Easter of the blessed Sacrament of CHRIST'S Body and Blood, sometimes renders the solemnities too protracted to be to the end enjoyed. But where the services succeed each other as was designed, there is the happiest combination of continued service, and desirable bodily refreshment. Thus, Morning Prayer may be offered at sunrise; and at a later hour follows the Litany, in which as many as can attend join fervently with the minister. Before noon, begins the great service of the day—the EASTER EUCHARIST. As the priest enters the chancel, the old Introit is devoutly chanted,—or the metrical version is sung:—"Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither shalt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption." Then, after the Decalogue, as usual, comes the beautiful Collect, commemorative of Him who "hath overcome

death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life." To this succeeds the Epistle, "*If ye, then, be risen with* CHRIST, seek those things which are above:" and then follows the Holy Gospel, in which the beloved Apostle describes to us the early scene at the Sepulchre on the morning of the first Easter Sunday.

Then we say the Nicene Creed; and then the minister ascends the pulpit, to preach, like St. Paul at Athens, "JESUS and the resurrection." Where the services are thus arranged, he has both time and strength to prepare us for what is to follow, by the inspiring doctrine which he must on this day proclaim to the people of GOD. Oh, sublimest hour in the Christian's year! when the Paschal Altar is spread, and all things are ready, and the ambassador of CHRIST bids us come to the Supper of the Lamb!

And now the Sermon is over, and the thoughtless and gazing multitude have withdrawn, and the doors are shut, and CHRIST is within, as of old. At the Holy Table stands the commissioned agent of His own eternal Priesthood, once again to "do this in commemoration of Him"! How wonderfully this sublime memorial fulfils its purpose! how augustly, as it proceeds, CHRIST is set forth "before our eyes, crucified among us"! At the Preface, how touching is the recognition of CHRIST as the very Paschal Lamb! and in the Trisagion, how are we joined in adoration with the heavenly choir itself!

The words of Institution recount the solemn scenes of the week, and remind us of the upper chamber in which the last Passover and the first EUCHARIST were celebrated. For this communion there is great propriety in using the verses beginning,—

> "All worthy Thou, who hast redeem'd
> And ransom'd us to GOD."

But there are several hymns which may lend appropriate verses to this Sacrifice.

Thus, recurring to Good Friday,—

> "Tis finish'd!—heaven is reconciled,
> And all the power of darkness spoil'd;"

or, again, anticipating the Ascension,—

> "The rising GOD forsakes His tomb;
> Up to His FATHER'S court He flies;"

or, in view of the eternal Easter Song,—

> "Who are these in bright array,
> This innumerable throng?"

And then we receive the heavenly food itself, and so go in peace to our homes, with many a holy resolve and secret prayer "to go in the strength of that meat" all our lives, and to the Mount of GOD. Oh, what a happy day! Like those who kept the first Easter with CHRIST, our hearts have burned within us all the time; and He hath made Himself known to us in the BREAKING OF BREAD.

The Evening Psalms and Lessons follow the analogies of the Morning Service; but the Second Lesson must be specially noted as an Apostolic Sermon on the text, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." It is an exposition of the Morning Introit. As we thus conclude the festival, let us praise GOD that now, in all the world, the same Church of CHRIST confesses Him with boldness, which on the first Easter was contained in one room at Jerusalem, and that secretly, for fear of the Jews.

Easter Monday.

EASTER-TIDE continues through the octave of Easter-day, that is, for eight days inclusive; though for two days only are special services appointed. Thus all the Scriptures specially referring to the Resurrection may be read, and the opportunity of communion may be still afforded; for it is required by universal consent, as well as by the ancient canons, that every one should endeavour to receive the Holy Communion at the Easter season.

The gift of manna, which was a foreshadowing of the true Bread of Heaven, as we learn from CHRIST Himself, (St. John vi. 31, 32,) is the subject of the First Lesson, in connection with the First Passover of the Hebrews. Observe also how the seventh day was hallowed, in prospect of the rest of JESUS in the tomb, and how on the first day

a new supply of manna was given, in token of the weekly Easter, or Sunday. It is also to be noted that on Friday a double portion of manna was sent, that being the day on which the Bread of Heaven should be given for all the world. The Second Lesson is St. Matthew's account of the Resurrection.

At Evening Prayer, the First Lesson contains the most ancient prophecy of the Resurrection, and must be regarded as an exhibition of man's wretchedness and CHRIST'S sufficiency. "I know that my Redeemer liveth:"—here is the balm of Gilead for every mortal wound, and for all the diseases of our souls. The Second Lesson is St. Peter's sermon, in Solomon's porch, where "the Prince of life," of whom he speaks, had walked so lately, (St. John x. 23,) and where they had threatened to stone Him. This Lesson, it must be remembered, concludes just where St. Peter's sermon was interrupted by the Captain of the Temple, with the priests and Sadducees, who were "grieved that they taught the people, and preached through JESUS, the Resurrection of the dead."

The Epistle is the narrative of the first preaching of the Resurrection to the Gentiles, in the case of Cornelius; and the Gospel is the story of the walk to Emmaus, and of the first Easter Eucharist—which was celebrated by our LORD Himself, after an Easter Sermon which He Himself preached. So, on the return of Easter, our hearts should burn within us, as the Church "opens

to us the Scriptures," and as CHRIST still makes Himself known to us in the "breaking of bread."

On Easter Monday it is usual to commence the parochial year; wardens are appointed, and every thing begins afresh. Thus the month Abib was enjoined in the first Lesson of yesterday to be "the first month in the year to you."

Easter Tuesday.

EASTER, like Christmas, is a time of household rejoicing: and when the solemnities of Sunday are passed, a moderate festivity should be encouraged. The children, too, with their gilded Easter-eggs —the egg being an Oriental symbol of life in a sepulchre, which breaks forth of itself, and flies to heaven—should be made to understand why it is meet to make merry, and Who it is that "was dead and is alive again."

During the whole of the Easter Season, the concluding prayers of the Burial Service are frequently used by the clergy, after Sermons, and elsewhere, with pleasing propriety. It is also customary, n some churches, to use as an Easter benediction, after the Evening Sermon, St. Paul's language:— "The GOD of peace, who brought again from the dead, etc." Thus, the service may be enriched, though there are no special Collects for these supplementary days.

The Lesson from Isaiah, this morning, has many passages worthy of remark; but it is appointed chiefly because of the concluding verses, and the prophecy, "Thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." In the Evening Lesson, from the same prophet, observe the anthem of the ancient Hebrews, who at the time of their Feast of Tabernacles, especially on "the last day of the feast," used to sing it, as they drew water from Siloam, and bore it, with pomp, to the Temple: "with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of Salvation." Our SAVIOUR (St. John vii. 37) took advantage of this ceremony, on one occasion, to present Himself as the Water of Life and as the Fountain for sin and uncleanness, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." The Second Lesson, in the morning, is St. Luke's testimony of the Resurrection; and in the evening we have, in the same place, St. Paul's noble argument that we should "live, henceforth, not unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose again."

The Epistle is St. Paul's sermon, at Antioch, preached in the Synagogue, after the Lessons for the day had been read, in which he proved from the prophets that CHRIST was the true David, and that He must have risen from the dead. The Gospel continues the Gospel of yesterday, and concludes our Easter solemnities, at the Altar, with the words of our triumphant LORD Himself.

First Sunday after Easter.

This is sometimes called *Low Sunday*, or the *Sunday of Albs*. The former name, pertaining to it as the octave of Easter, signifies that, although not the High Feast, it is the first of the Lower Easters which we keep every week; and the latter is an old name, derived from the throng of Catechumens who, in ancient times, appeared at Church, in the albs, or white garments given to them at their baptism. This ceremony of Albs is done away; but not so the spirit of the same. The Church would have us now revert, all together, to that rising with Christ, out of the burial of Baptism, in which our Christian life began; and it will be observed that the edifying of the young Christian in practical holiness is a prominent thought in the spirit of the Services, from this time till Pentecost, when the riper fruits of the Spirit are brought into view.

"Pureness of living" is, therefore, prominent in the language of the Collect; while the Epistle contains the doctrine which is embodied in the familiar hymn,—

> "Let the water and the blood
> From Thy side, a healing flood,
> Be of sin the double cure:
> Save from wrath, and make me pure."

One of the texts occurring in the Epistle may be regarded as an Epitome of Revelation:—"And this is the record, that GOD hath given to us eternal life, and *this life is in His Son.*" The flaming sword is removed, and the fall remedied; we may now put forth our hands to the Tree of Life, and eat, and live forever. The SON of GOD hath destroyed the works of the devil; and henceforth "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life." Mere Deism or Socinianism will not save a man. Salvation turns on the acceptance of the SON of GOD, and on being so grafted into Him as to partake His life.

With this great truth connects the Gospel for the day, "As my FATHER hath sent me, *even so send I you.*" Here is the great mission of the ministry of reconciliation. CHRIST rose for our justification —to "sprinkle many nations;" and therefore His first words are those which are to perpetuate His work to the end of time. There are always to be in the world authorized Ambassadors of CHRIST, administering "the water and the blood" to the souls of men for the remission of sins. The great bestowal of the keys follows, in the words, "Receive ye the HOLY GHOST: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." In this formula is given the authority to bind and loose, to baptize and to administer the LORD'S Supper, and (by admitting to or excluding from the Sacraments) to remit and retain sins. But there is no arbi-

trary power conferred in these words: the Christian priesthood bind nothing and loose nothing, except as they act *according to the laws of* CHRIST. The truly penitent and believing, with little children, receive benefit from these powers: and only the unworthy and unbelieving need dread the sentence of excommunication, or other censures. An ancient Father observed that when a Bishop or Presbyter censures, or excommunicates, otherwise than as CHRIST has ordained, he only harms himself.

This great text refers then to the "one baptism for the remission of sins," which is professed in the Creed. It is to be interpreted by the "Acts of the Apostles:" by what they actually did under this commission. As to the forms of absolution, and confession for baptized persons, they are of Ecclesiastical origin, and have greatly differed in different ages of the Church, being adjuncts of the one sacrament and preparatives to the other, but not sacraments in themselves. Our Church exacts, in several cases, a general confession, and provides for private confession in extreme cases only. A penitential system is requisite to full Communion, in the nature of things, and must, of necessity, exist in some form or other; but the gross abuses, and frauds, which have been practised in this matter, by corrupt churches, make it all-important that we should the more carefully keep the simple truth as here recorded.

The Apostolic Commission was instituted after

the Resurrection. CHRIST had not given any general Commission to His Apostles, when He died on the Cross, though He had promised that He *would* give them the keys. Consequently, the existence of a body of men, bearing this Commission, is a perpetual witness of the Resurrection. The "Apostolical Succession"—as it is called—is a perpetual token that CHRIST rose from the dead, and that He sent forth witnesses to proclaim His Resurrection, with whom He promised to remain till the end of the world. Any ministry, then, which is not of Apostolical Succession, is not a competent witness that CHRIST rose again for our justification, according to the Scriptures; but of this truth, the Apostolic Church is the Pillar and Ground.

In the Lessons from Isaiah, to-day, we are to look for allusions to our LORD's power over death and Hades—the dark river, and the land of the enemy. Hence we have, in the morning, several such passages: *e.g.*—"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." With reference to what has been already said of the Gospel for the day, and of the Apostolic Succession, observe also the text, "Therefore, ye are My witnesses, saith the LORD, that I am God;" and again, "I am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." In the Evening, observe, "I am the

first, I also am the last," and reflect on the similar passage in the Revelation, and on CHRIST, as the speaker in both places. Then listen to the residue of the Lesson: "thus saith the LORD thy Redeemer. . . . Oh that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! . . . There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked."

The Lesson from the Acts, not only completes the melancholy history of Judas; but shows how GOD took care that the Apostolic line should be continued, to witness the Resurrection. The text—"His bishopric let another take"—is proof that the successors of the Apostles are rightly termed *Bishops*, although that term is a generic one, like the term *pastor*, and hence in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, it is, in a limited sense, used for the inferior office of the Presbyter. The Presbyter was one of the bishops, or pastors, of a particular flock, or congregation; but the Apostle was the Bishop of a district like Crete, or of a whole city like Ephesus, and hence he is called, in the Revelation, the "angel" of such a Church—*Angel* and *Apostle* meaning the same thing—a messenger. We usually give the name *Angel* to heavenly messengers, however, and the name *Bishop*, with equal propriety, to chief pastors.

The Second Evening Lesson is the sublimest of all those glorious bursts of inspired poetry with which St. Paul's Epistles abound. It is the fullest exposition we have of the doctrine of the Resurrection: it declares that the resurrection bodies

of the righteous shall be as truly their own bodies as any given flower is the product of its own particular seed. On the other hand, it shall not be the body that dies and is buried, any more than the same glorious flower is the perishing seed that was sown. The identity consists in the connection between the product and the germ: "to every seed his own body," and yet, "thou sowest not that body that shall be." The text, "what shall they do which are baptized for the dead?" seems to have reference to the martyrs, whose baptism of blood, for a dead CHRIST, and for the faith of dead Patriarchs and Apostles, would be without a shadow of hope. On the other hand, for a living CHRIST, and for the patriarchs and prophets as "living unto Him," in the power of His Resurrection, the martyrs might well consent to be "baptized with the baptism that He was baptized with," and St. Paul and others might, as willingly, "stand in jeopardy, every hour." As for the Apostle's "fighting with beasts at Ephesus," although he may have contended in the arena, in some unrecorded persecution, it is more likely that he here speaks of his persecutors as "beasts;" for so St. Ignatius, the Martyr Bishop of Antioch, in his Epistle to the Romans, speaks of the "ten leopards," or soldiers, that guarded him, and who abused him with rude indignities, as he journeyed towards Rome, to be devoured by lions in the Flavian Amphitheatre.

Second Sunday after Easter.

The Paschal Lamb is now exhibited as the Shepherd; for this is the day which the French call so prettily the Sunday of the *Bon Pasteur*, referring to the beautiful words of the Gospel: "I am the Good Shepherd." The Gallican Church, until lately, retained many other ancient resemblances to the Anglican; for the genuine Gallicans did not wholly submit to the Roman yoke, even at the Council of Trent. Unhappily for them, however, they gave enough power to the Pope to enable him to destroy their ancient Church; and to substitute for it, after their first Revolution, a purely papal one, which has almost entirely abolished the good things that were left, and for which the nobler spirits among them once contended so boldly.

In reciting the Collect, we must not fail to recognise the reflected form of the verb, in the words *endeavour ourselves*, which is here the same as in the Confirmation-office, and in the Ordinal, at the close of the Bishop's address to the candidates for the Priesthood.

The Epistle speaks of Christ as "the Bishop and *Shepherd* of our souls;" and the Gospel expounds the idea contained in that beautiful name which Jacob first gave the Messiah, when he said, "From thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel."

In the Collect, the Good Shepherd, "who laid down His life for His sheep," is exhibited as our atoning sacrifice, and our blessed example; and we pray for grace to accept His atonement, and to follow His steps. The Introit, to-day, can be none other so appropriately as the 23d Psalm.

In the First Lesson, at Morning Prayer, we have the passage, "O death, I will be thy plagues;" and in the Second, we have the sermon of St. Peter in Solomon's porch, asserting the Resurrection of CHRIST, and upbraiding His murderers. The fact that our Lord had walked and preached in this porch of Solomon, seems to have made it dear to the Apostles. It was an open gallery, looking towards the Mount of Olives, and commanding a view of many sacred places.

At Evening Prayer, observe the text, "In Thee the fatherless findeth mercy;" and, also, the fine passage that follows, "I will be as the dew unto Israel." In the Lesson, from St. Paul, we see the character of a good pastor, under CHRIST the Chief Shepherd—"rejoicing in His sufferings" for the flock of CHRIST, and "warning every man and teaching every man, in all wisdom." This same Lesson abounds with references to the redemption which we have through CHRIST's blood, "even the forgiveness of sins." A choice Anthem for this day might be made from the Canticles, (i. 7, 8:) "Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest, where Thou makest Thy flock to rest," etc.

Third Sunday after Easter.

The spirit of the service is denoted by the Collect, which (primarily with respect to the Catechumens baptized at Easter, but not less intentionally with respect to others) beseeches God, that all who are sworn under Christ's banner, may wear such a livery of fidelity, that those who are in errour may see their good works and learn to follow them as they follow Christ.

Christian consistency in the profession of Christ Crucified is the theme of the day; and its mighty power over sinners, to persuade them to repentance —this is suggested. The Epistle, therefore, shows us what sort of morality this consistency requires: and the Gospel shows us Whom we follow, and whither He is leading us, by His example. He says, "I go to the Father;" and adds, "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice."

The First Lesson reminds us of the Judgment-day, when our consistency, or inconsistency, as Christians, will forever decide our fate, and when we shall stand for an impartial award, among the "multitudes in the valley of Decision." The Second Lesson contains an awful instance of inconsistent and hypocritical profession among the early disciples. The case of Ananias and Sapphira should teach us how fearful it is to attempt to deceive ourselves or others, in dealings with the

Church of God, and the ministers of Christ. As the First Lesson hints the eternal, so this Lesson suggests the temporal consequences, with which God sometimes visits such iniquity.

In the Evening Lessons, while we note the promise—"the Word of the Lord shall go forth from Jerusalem," as fulfilled in the rise of the Christian Church, we must not forget that this Word is a Moral Law, as well as a Gospel—and that it is described in the text, "He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths." The Second Lesson, which repeats the Easter Gospel, is a summary of these *ways* and *paths*, which Christians are called to keep; and concerning which we pray, in the Eucharist, that we may continue in them, and "do all such good works, as He hath prepared for us to walk in."

Fourth Sunday after Easter.

The Gospel for the day dwells on the Lord's predicted Ascension, and on His promise of the Comforter. The Epistle reminds us of the glory that shall be revealed in us, by hinting the nature of this gift of the Comforter, who came down from the "Father of Lights," for the purpose of preparing us to go up to Him, and to be "partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light." The Collect suggests to us the desire of Christ's pro-

mises, and the love of His precepts, as the means of keeping the heart fixed, "where true joys are to be found," even amid the changes of this world.

The difficult passage in the Gospel, may be comprehended by the reflection, that the Comforter is also the Advocate of CHRIST, and comes to finish the work which CHRIST began, by striving with men's hearts in behalf of their SAVIOUR. He convinces them of the great comprehensive sin of unbelief,—as when "they were pricked to the heart," in view of their having crucified the LORD of Glory He convinces them of the righteousness of CHRIST by His exaltation to the right hand of the FATHER, and so of the righteousness which sinners may derive from Him who, thus, liveth for our justification. Finally, He convinces men of judgment to come, because "the Prince of this World" is judged already—that is to say, by CHRIST'S triumph over him on the Cross, where He bruised Satan's head, and "spoiled principalities and powers." This promise being fulfilled, the remaining judgment of the world is as certain as what has already been executed on "the Prince of this World." Compare the words of CHRIST, (St. John xii. 31:) "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out."

The Lesson from Micah, reverting to the Nativity at Bethlehem, shows the exaltation of the Messiah in the text, "Now shall He be great unto the ends of the earth; and this man shall be the Peace."

The Second Lesson reminds us, by the example of St. Stephen, of the glory which CHRIST sheds from the right hand of GOD, upon His saints who suffer for Him. In the Evening Lessons we note the texts, (1,) "Behold, upon the mountains, the feet of him that bringeth *good tidings*, that publisheth peace!" "*O Judah! keep thy solemn feasts; perform thy vows!*"—and (2) "Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us *good tidings* of your faith and charity." Here is the Gospel-trumpet, sounded by prophets, and echoed back in the obedience of Christian converts.

Rogation Sunday.

WHEN a friend departs to visit a glorious City, and the Court of a great King, we have messages to send by him. When we have a friend at court to present our petitions to the great king himself, we feel emboldened to make known our requests. These two ideas are made prominent to-day. JESUS is our Intercessor and Advocate, with the FATHER; hence, Prayer and its nature, as presented through CHRIST'S merits and intercession, are the subjects of this day's services, in view of the "going up on high" of our Great High-Priest.

The Collect recognises the FATHER as the "Giver of all good things," and suggests that, as in keeping His commandments "*there is great reward*," our

lives should, in the first place, correspond with our prayers. This also is the idea of the Epistle, which enjoins a practical, instead of a ceremonial religion; for the *religion* here spoken of means the *profession* of religion, which is better made in a spotless and benevolent life, than in noisy words, or in hearing without obeying the Gospel. Let no man suppose, however, that he "keeps himself unspotted from the world," if he does not live in full communion with the Church, which is the only Ark of refuge from its pollutions. The Gospel, while it contains the intimation of the Ascension, dwells on the nature of prayer—as "asking in CHRIST'S Name." Since our LORD'S Ascension, no one has ever prayed aright, who did not expressly, or by implication, say, "through JESUS CHRIST our LORD." He alone is worthy to ask and to "receive gifts for men;" we only venture to ask for His merits' sake, and receive through the channel of His love. The fitness of this Gospel, to the week of the Rogation-fasts, must be apparent.

In the Lesson from Zechariah, note, among other texts, the allusion to the fasts of Israel, as "cheerful feasts;" and also the promise, "the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase." One of the primary purposes of the Rogation-fasts was to supplicate a blessing on the fruits of the earth before harvest. In the Second Lesson we see a fulfilment of one of the promises of the

First: where an Ethiopian, as it were, "takes hold of the skirts of him that is a Jew," and says to St. Philip, "I will go with you, for I have heard that GOD is with you." This Ethiopian had become a proselyte before, and, on a like principle, had been to Jerusalem to worship.

The Rogation-fasts are again visible in the First Lesson at Evening Prayer:—"Ask ye of the LORD, rain." One object of these fasts was to deprecate war; and hence we note,—"they shall fight, because the LORD is with them, and the riders on horses shall be confounded." Here the adversary is represented as overcome and forced to be peaceful by the power of GOD. The spiritual enemy must not be forgotten, however; nor those terrible "riders on horses," (in the Apocalypse,) War, Pestilence, and Famine, against whom the "Faithful and True" went forth, "conquering and to conquer." This is the teaching of the Second Lesson, where JESUS is portrayed as having overcome death, and enabled all believers to conquer the same enemy in His strength. This Lesson, also, brings the Easter Lessons to a conclusion, and introduces the Ascension-week, by those touching words wherewith we are bidden to "comfort one another," looking for the general Resurrection and the Ascension of all believers.

There is no Rogation Collect, properly so called; but on this day, and three Rogation days following, it is proper to use, after the Collect for the day, that beautiful one appended to the Commu-

nion Office—"Almighty God, the Fountain of all wisdom, Who knowest our necessities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking." This Collect sums up the teaching of the Gospel for the day, in the words with which it concludes: "those things which for *our unworthiness* we dare not, and for our blindness *we cannot ask*, vouchsafe to give us *for the worthiness* of Thy Son."

Rogation Days.

These Fasts are meant to prepare us for the Communion on Ascension-day; to which great festival they are as a minor Lent. Christ goes up to be our Intercessor: hence the great subject of Prayer, as connected with Sacrifice and the Mediatorial work of Christ, comes prominently into view. We learn to conceive of Prayer as a plan of intercourse and correspondence with the ascended Lord, "whom, having not seen, we love."

The origin of these fasts is comparatively modern, as they do not date from Apostolic times, but were instituted in the fifth century. Mamertus, Bishop of Vienne, in Gaul, is said to have appointed them, in deprecation of the ravages of the Northern barbarians, which then seemed to threaten the existence of the Church in many places; while earthquakes and pestilences apparently connected them with the wrath of God.

On this occasion the Litany received an addition in those Rogations, which, among us, are commonly known as "the Lesser Litany," because they are usually omitted on Sundays, and other festive days, when the Litany occurs to be said, and are reserved for days of fasting and the like. These Rogations were not merely offered in Church, but in the open air, the people going in processions, and saying them responsively with their pastor. One can imagine the impressiveness, in such circumstances, of the suffrage, "O God, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us, the noble works which Thou didst in their days, and in the old time before them." Then came the response, "O Lord, arise, etc."

At the Reformation, in the Church of England, the Rogation processions were retained, and in some places they have been kept up to the present day. The Curate with his parishioners goes through the parish, pausing at certain metes and bounds, to offer thanksgivings, and to implore a blessing on the fields and farms. He also recites the Mosaic formula: "Cursed be he which translateth the bounds and doles of his neighbour," and the 104th Psalm, *Benedic anima mea*, is said, or sung, responsively. Of these observances good George Herbert was a great favourer, in his day, because, as he says in his "Country Parson," (a charming old Church-book, which nobody should be ignorant of,) "there are contained therein four manifest advantages. *First*, a blessing of God for

the fruits of the field: *Secondly*, justice in the preservation of bounds: *Thirdly*, charity in loving, walking, and neighbourly accompanying one another, with reconciling of differences at that time, if there be any; *Fourthly*, mercy in relieving the poor by a liberal distribution and largess, which at that time is, or ought to be, used. Whereupon the Parson exacts of all to be present at the perambulation. There is much preaching in this friendliness." In America this pretty rural ceremony is hardly possible, owing to the variety of sects which injure our Christianity and destroy good neighbourhood; but we can keep the Rogation-fasts in Church; observing that our American Church has added a Thanksgiving Feast to the Calendar, as "a blessing of GOD for the fruits of the field," which corresponds with these fasts very perfectly. It will be seen that the idea of such a Thanksgiving is of Church origin, and, as we now keep it, engrafts the spirit of the Rogation days upon the old English "harvest home."

Among the Homilies will be found a curious one, for these days, divided into three parts; but it is not suitable for modern use. The Rogation Collect already noted, at the close of the Communion Service, with the use of the Rogations on Wednesday, when the Litany is said, will sufficiently mark the observance; more especially if Selections of Psalms be used, instead of those for the days of the month. Thus the First Selection contains allusion to the LORD "mighty in battle,"

and includes the *Benedic anima mea*, already mentioned as special to the Season. The Fifth Selection contains the 91st Psalm, with its promises of deliverance from disease and death; and the Seventh celebrates the goodness of GOD, in bestowing the fruits of the earth. Deprecations of War, Pestilence, and Famine are thus provided, and the Selections, so seldom preferable in place of the regular Psalms, are turned to a good account, for sufficient cause. In the use of these Psalms, however, let us never forget that temporal blessings are hardly to be desired, except in connection with those spiritual ones which CHRIST went up on high to receive as the chief gifts of GOD to men. Shall we pray for the fields that have been sown by the husbandmen, and forget those which are white to the harvest, and which call for spiritual labourers? Shall we "ask of the LORD, rain," to fertilize the soil, and forget to ask for the outpouring of the HOLY GHOST upon the fallow of men's hearts? Nay, rather let these be our chief objects of petition when we reflect that we have a friend at Court, an Advocate with the FATHER, who "ever liveth to make intercession." Let us love to dwell on this Mediatorial work of CHRIST, and be earnest in using this privilege of access to the FATHER, by prayer offered through His merits who has given it as a parting bequest to the Church, from which His bodily presence is taken away.

Ascension Day.

THIS day concludes the glorious circuit through which the Sun of Righteousness has run His course. He who was with GOD from the beginning, was with Him, in His divine nature, even while He walked on earth, or descended into Hades: but now His human nature is exalted to the right hand of the FATHER; and we see our own nature, in Him, advanced to the glory which is the common destiny of the redeemed: for He is "not ashamed to call us brethren," and we are "made to sit with Him in heavenly places" already. This inspiring truth is summed up in the Proper Preface, in which the Church, like the lark, seems to take the wings of the morning, and to sing at the very gate of heaven her exulting hope, "that where He is, thither we shall also ascend, and reign with Him, in glory."

We are taught, then, according to the Creed, that the *corporal* presence of CHRIST is in heaven, and, hence, that it is His *spiritual* presence which is with us in our meeting together in His name, which is with His ministers in the discharge of their functions, and which is more especially vouchsafed to faith in the LORD'S Supper.

Thus we see how vain is that shocking errour of Rome, that the corporal flesh and blood, "nerves and bones," of CHRIST are daily *immolated* afresh,

and consumed by the teeth and digestive functions of even unbelieving and hypocritical recipients! CHRIST's blessed Body was unbroken, and stood before the disciples, when He said of the Bread, "This is My Body," and of the Cup, "This is My Blood." They did not eat and drink what stood before them and spake unto them, and was not yet crucified; but their faith fed on a spiritual substance which He gave them, with the outward sign, and which was His Flesh and His Blood, not in the letter, "which profiteth nothing," but in "spirit" and "life."

At the Holy Communion, to-day, we are to reflect then that CHRIST's glorious presence is, corporally, in Heaven; that "a bone of Him shall not be broken;" and that it is only by faith that we can feed upon Him, and "discern the LORD's Body," in the Sacrament. We ask no further questions: we do not say, "How can He give us His Flesh to eat?" but we believe just what He says, that the consecrated and broken Bread is bread, and yet His Body; and that the Wine is wine, and yet His Blood. To deny that the outward sign is natural bread and wine, is just as really to destroy the Sacrament, as to deny that the inward and spiritual grace is "the Body and Blood of CHRIST." St. Paul clearly enforces this, (I. Cor. x. 16, 17,) when he says, "The cup of blessing, which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of CHRIST?" He surely does not mean that the metal of the cup is changed into the blood:

yet if anybody is so carnal as to insist on a literal change, he says it of *the* cup, and not the wine. So he says, "The bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of CHRIST?" Here is the Church's doctrine, in a word; it is bread, and yet it is the body; materially the one, and spiritually the other.

Two Thursdays, therefore, aid us in gaining the full idea of the Eucharist, Maunday-Thursday, and "Holy Thursday," or Ascension Day. On the first, the bread and wine were taken and received as CHRIST'S Body and Blood, while the unchanged CHRIST stood before them. On the second, the Body of our LORD became invisible to human eyes: but it is required of faith to behold that Body at the right hand of the FATHER, and at the same time to "discern the LORD'S Body" in the LORD'S Supper. And this is just what our LORD prepared us for, (St. John vi. 62,) when He said, "Doth this offend you? what and if ye shall see the SON of Man ascend up where He was before?" It will be hard to believe the two facts, he intimates, unless you will understand, that I am not speaking, as the silly and carnal Jews imagine, of my corporal substance, which I am going to take up to Heaven, after the Resurrection, but of my spiritual substance, which I will give to the faithful, so that they shall "eat of this bread and live forever." He says all this, when he adds, "It is the SPIRIT that quickeneth; *the flesh profiteth nothing;* the

words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

It must be remembered, too, that CHRIST says of Himself, "I am the living Bread which came down from heaven;" and again, "I am the Bread of Life." If we are to understand His words carnally, therefore, we may as well affirm that His body was "transubstantiated" into bread, as that bread is so turned into His body. This awfully profane dogma of the Trent Council not only contradicts Scripture and the primitive Church, but bases itself on the *natural philosophy* of Aristotle, and thus incorporates an exploded system of material things, with the faith of CHRIST! To believe it, it is not enough to believe in CHRIST and His Apostles; but we must also believe in the Pagan Philosopher, Aristotle. If his theory of *matter* is false, (as is now conceded,) then this dogma of transubstantiation is false; for it rests on his theory. It is sad to recur to false doctrines instead of simply presenting the truth; but since this net has been spread for souls, it is necessary to "beware lest any man spoil us through *philosophy* and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the *rudiments of the world*, and not after CHRIST."

The Epistle, to-day, is a portion from the Acts, giving the detailed account of the Ascension, and containing the great truth that the *forty* days which closed at the Ascension, were days in which CHRIST gave to His Apostles their full instructions as to the founding and perpetuating of His kingdom

in the earth. The book of the Acts is a record of these instructions as carried out by the Apostles, after the HOLY GHOST had come to bring all things to mind which CHRIST had told them. Thus, as Moses received "the pattern in the mount," during the forty days in which the tabernacle was set up, the Church, of which that tabernacle was but a figure, was delivered to the Apostles, as a better pattern in the mount. The Gospel is St. Mark's account of His "receiving up"—"after He had spoken to them;" and St. Luke's narrative is the Second Morning Lesson. In the Second Evening Lesson, St. Paul expounds the Apostolic Commission as an Ascension-gift, carrying out the idea of a triumphal pageant, where the conqueror, in his chariot, scattered gifts among the people, and led his captives in his train. The First Evening Lesson brings the forty days of the giving of the Law into comparison with the forty days of the founding of the Church on that "Stone which the builders rejected:" but the First Morning Lesson is a very important one, and reminds us of the fact, that there were two typical ascensions before that of CHRIST. In the patriarchal times, "Enoch was translated;" in the Mosaic dispensation, Elijah "went up by a whirlwind into heaven." Thus, before and after the flood, men were darkly taught of their destination to something above this world; but in CHRIST they were shown the way, as well as the meritorious cause, of human exaltation, and were fully assured that the hea-

vens were opened to all believers. Observe, that Elijah was carried up by heavenly agencies; but CHRIST sublimely rose by His own power, and rode upon the heavens by his name JAH, that is, JEHOVAH.

In the falling of Elijah's mantle was presignified the gift, by CHRIST, to His Apostles, of His own prophetic commission, as well as of other spiritual powers. Elisha is a type of the Apostolic ministry, "healing the waters" and taking away dearth and barrenness from the world. The "little children" who mocked him were rather profane young men, who knew enough to scorn him, as a prophet, and to wish him out of the world with Elijah. Their profaneness in bidding him "go up," that is, ascend to heaven, (so that they might live on, unrebuked in sin,) argues a deep depravity in themselves and in their parents. The curse of the prophet was not a personal, but an inspired, malediction, and presignifies the judgments of GOD on all those who scorn His ministers and hinder the work of the Gospel.

It only remains to say, that Proper Psalms are provided for this high festival, which are so appropriate, that the day itself furnishes the comment; and that the discretionary substitute for the *Venite* is also an *Anthem* which may be sung, with impressive effect, instead of a metrical Hymn. The Old Introit is Psalm 47th; and the Hymn which has been set to the music called "Cheshunt," in the

collections, is a triumphant song of victory. How rapturous the apostrophe—

> "Loose all your bars of massy light,
> And wide unfold the radiant scene;
> He claims these mansions as His right,
> Receive the King of Glory in."

In Communion, the two verses (Hymn 98) beginning,

> "While thus ye follow my commands,
> I'm with you till the world shall end—"

will be found a most fitting conclusion to the special solemnities of the celebration.

If we have dwelt at great length on the services of this Feast, it is not only because it is too little honoured, but because there is nothing which can enter the mind of man, so entirely beyond all that man imagines by his own powers, and so ennobling to his nature, as the truth which this day celebrates. Poor sinners, that we are—poor dying worms, can it be that we are heirs of immortal glory, and that the way into the heaven of heavens stands wide open, so that, in body and soul, we may follow the Son of God, and be welcomed by Him, as brethren, and partakers of His throne?

Expectation Sunday.

PERHAPS the darkest Sunday that was ever hallowed by the Church was that which followed our LORD's Ascension. The little band of the faithful were only an hundred and twenty, the eleven Apostles, with the Blessed Virgin and other holy women, included; and one narrow room in Jerusalem—probably that in which the Last Supper had been celebrated—contained the whole Catholic Church. CHRIST had said, "I will not leave you *orphans*," and had promised to send the Comforter. But on this Sunday, the LORD had gone up to glory, and the Comforter was not yet come. So then, for the time they were *orphans:* but they looked for the timely fulfilment of the promise, and continued in prayer and supplication. They were expecting the Comforter, and hence this day is known in the Church as "Expectation Sunday," or the Sunday after the Ascension.

The Introit is Psalm 93d, and the *Veni Creator*, in one of its versions, should be sung to-day, as also on Whitsunday.

The Collect throws us back in spirit, and makes us sympathize with that primitive band of disciples, to whom JESUS had said, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your FATHER's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." We pray that we may not be "left comfortless," and we beseech Almighty GOD

by the power of the Spirit, to "exalt us to the same place whither our SAVIOUR CHRIST is gone before." There is a touching harmony of sentiment in the Epistle and Gospel. "Be sober, and watch unto prayer," and, 'Have fervent charity among yourselves," may well be supposed to have been the primitive watchwords at this solemn and critical moment; and as, of old, every one felt that something depended on himself, individually, so now we are exhorted, according to the gifts we have received, to "minister one to another." The Gospel rehearses the overwhelming words of CHRIST to the Apostolic company, predicting their labours, sufferings, and deaths: at the same time, while it shows what great need they had of comfort, it renews the promise of comfort, in the words, "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the FATHER—even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the FATHER—He shall testify of me." The procession of the Spirit from the FATHER, here asserted, in no wise conflicts with His equal proceeding from the SON, which is elsewhere implied, if not expressly taught, in Scripture.

The First Lesson, in the Morning Service, is from the prophet Joel, and opens with the recognition of "a day of darkness and gloominess," but ends with that prediction of the outpouring of the Spirit of Consolation, to which St. Peter expressly refers in his sermon on Pentecost day. The Second Lesson is OUR SAVIOUR'S Intercessory prayer;

and is most happily introduced to remind us of what our glorious Mediator and Advocate is doing for His faithful, there where He "ever liveth to make intercession for us." How much that should inspire our hopes and gratitude is implied in that expression of our SAVIOUR, in which He anticipates the conversion of unborn millions!—"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them, also, which shall believe on Me, through their word." If we have thus believed the Apostolic Scriptures, and are admitted to the Apostolic Communion and fellowship, what text is there, in all the Scriptures, that should delight or console us more? At this time, when it is read in Church, so appropriately, carrying us back to the Holy Week, and forward to Pentecost, this Lesson has a most impressive effect, and comes to the devout mind with cheering solemnity.

In the Evening Lessons, observe the promises uttered by Zephaniah, and the precept, "Wait ye upon me, saith the LORD;" also, in the Lesson from St. Paul, the corresponding words, "the LORD direct your hearts into the love of GOD, and into the *patient waiting* for CHRIST." The conclusion, not less fitted to Expectation Sunday, teaches us that primitive charity and peace did not permit a compromise of Apostolic traditions, in favour of any brother's private judgment. Even *brethren*, forgetting Apostolic ordinances, were to be admonished, and suspended from the fellowship of the faithful: that they might all, with one accord,

strive together for the faith of the Gospel. If we expect GOD to manifest Himself to us, we must strive for Christian unity; and that, not in the surrender of Apostolic truth, but in its steadfast maintenance and profession. In these days, if a Christian brother refuses to obey the precepts of the Apostles, it is common to say, "It is of little consequence, provided he is sincere." But St. Paul says very differently: and his words are rehearsed, this day, to remind us that the HOLY GHOST comes as the Spirit of Truth: and that Truth must be the basis of the unity of the Spirit, and the bond of Peace.

Whitsunday.

THE COMFORTER IS COME! Think, first, of the joy and rapture with which the little Church, pent up in Jerusalem like lambs among wolves, took up this exulting strain, when, after ten days of waiting, the Eternal Spirit suddenly manifested His presence, and assured them that CHRIST, enthroned at the right hand of the FATHER, still loved His little flock, and had obtained the promised gift for their comfort and support. The coming of the HOLY GHOST, in new form and with augmented power, was the seal from the Most High, which certified all the whole Gospel to be from GOD. It proved the risen JESUS to be also

the glorified Jesus, (St. John vii. 39,) and so inspired the Church with a moral power and courage which nothing else could have given. This is seen in the intrepid bearing of the once timid Peter; and in the boldness of the whole Church, so lately assembling in secret "for fear of the Jews." But it is not moral power merely, for the outpouring of the Spirit had filled them with *supernatural gifts* and with divine energy. And all this is summed up in the Preface to the Trisagion, in this day's Eucharist,—which so touchingly unites our own estate as Christians, with the original coming of the Spirit, in the concluding words, "whereby *we have been brought out of darkness and errour*, into the clear light and true knowledge of Thee, and of Thy Son Jesus Christ."

The Epistle is the historical narrative of St. Luke, and the Gospel is a rehearsal of Christ's promises. The former winds up with sublime effect:—"We do hear them speak in our tongues, the wonderful works of God." The first-fruits of the Spirit were hymns and Creeds. Perhaps (as has been already suggested of a text occurring in the Service of the Second Sunday in Lent) those poetic fragments which Bishop Jebb finds so common in the New Testament were now first uttered or recalled. They rehearsed with rapture, not their own experiences and feelings, but the historic facts of the Gospel. In the Gospel, the promise of Christ is to be specially noted, "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your

remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." These words establish the inspiration of the New Testament Scriptures, and supersede all stupid inquiries as to when, or how, the Apostles and Evangelists "collected materials for their writings." Observe, also, the words concerning the Comforter, which show that He came, not only for the moment, but to abide with the Church forever, "even the Spirit of Truth, whom *the world cannot receive.*" Worldly men are seldom orthodox: they are carnal even in their religious views, and read Scripture with low ideas of its authority, and of its origin. Observe also that, of all our festivals, Pentecost is the least relished by the world. They cannot enter into it; it requires a spiritual mind to receive refreshment and delight from its celebration.

In the old Introit (Psalm xxxiii.) observe the passage, "By the Word of the LORD were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the Breath of His mouth." The WORD is CHRIST, and the BREATH is the HOLY GHOST. The Pentecostal Anthem, set forth instead of the *Venite*, is so fine that if used with the Second Selection of Psalms the Service is perhaps improved; but the Proper Psalms, especially the *Exurgat Deus*, can hardly be set aside without regret. The whole of Psalm 68th is a sublime prophecy of the Ascension and the coming of the Comforter; but note, in special reference to the immediate enlargement of the Apostolic ministry after Pentecost, the prediction

of the Psalmist, "the LORD gave the word, (*Gospel,*) great was the company of the preachers." The Proper Psalms, in the Evening Prayer, display the work of the Spirit in the Creation and the Resurrection.

The First Lesson, at Morning Prayer, rehearses the institution of the Feast of *the fiftieth day*, or "Pentecost." It was also called the "feast of weeks" by the Hebrews, because a week of weeks (seven times seven days) intervened between the Passover and this festival. It was reckoned from the day when the barley-sheaf was cut for the wave-offering of the Passover, which signified CHRIST, the "first-fruits" of the Resurrection or harvest of the world. The seven weeks seem to have been appointed with reference to the *Sevenfold* Spirit, of which the Seven golden candlesticks were a symbol under the Law. The English name, Whit-Sunday, is said by some to be properly "Wit-Sunday;" Wit being the old English for Wisdom, and the Comforter being the "Spirit of Wisdom." It is more common to explain the term by reference to the white raiment which used to be worn on this day. The *white-ness* of the Holy Dove, shedding the fiery tongues like feathers of gold, might as well be thought of in connection with the words, "ye shall be as the wings of a Dove that is covered with silver wings and her feathers like gold." But, in point of fact, the word is Whitsun-Day, a corruption of Pfingsten-

day, which was the old Saxon name, derived to us from the early English Church.

It must be noted that the argument for the Christian Sabbath cannot be separated from the argument for Easter and Pentecost. If the LORD hallowed the First day of the week, so also He hallowed those Feasts, by making them the occasion of the Resurrection and of the coming of the Comforter. It is the true view that the Passover and Pentecost were appointed under the Law to be perpetuated under the Gospel, when their nobler purpose is revealed. Observe how GOD Himself keeps and honours His own appointments. The Passover is made the day of deliverance from Egypt, because it is to be the time of JESUS' deliverance, and of our deliverance by Him: and Pentecost is made the day of giving the Law, because it is to be the day of giving the Spirit. Ten days, therefore, are numbered after the Ascension; and it is not till the day of Pentecost is *fully come* that GOD sends the HOLY GHOST. Scripture shows elsewhere that Pentecost was scrupulously observed, as a Christian festival, (Acts xviii. 21, xx. 16, I. Cor. xvi. 8,) by St. Paul, who so earnestly opposes the keeping of mere Jewish feasts, (Gal. iv. 9, 10, 11,) and whose observance of this day was evidently in accordance with the usage of the whole Church. The whole system of the "Christian Year" is thus demonstrated by a comparison of this First Lesson

with divine providences and Christian usages, as exhibited in the New Testament.

The Second Lesson contains a specimen of the *boldness* and wisdom with which two "unlearned and ignorant men" could preach the Gospel, when filled with the HOLY GHOST." Moreover, it celebrates the power of the Spirit in giving *boldness* to all the faithful, and in making the early Christians "love one another." It contains also part of the primitive Liturgy, which they seem to have chanted, "with one accord," as we do to this day. It consists of a Christian paraphrase of the second Psalm; and is further remarkable for the lyrical character of the prayer with which it concludes.

The Evening Lesson, from Isaiah, not only enumerates the Seven gifts of the Spirit, but prophetically names the countries into which the Pentecostal converts carried the Gospel,—"The Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites," of whom we hear in the Epistle. The Second Lesson proves the ordinary gifts of the Spirit to have been bestowed, in Confirmation, by "the laying on of hands," after the beginning of the Spirit's work in Baptism. The expression, "we have not so much as heard whether there be any HOLY GHOST," means only that they had not heard whether He was yet given. They were disciples of St. John Baptist, and they thus referred to the Baptist's promise, "He shall baptize you with the HOLY GHOST and with fire." Of the fulfilment of

this promise on the day of Pentecost they had not heard. John's baptism was not Christian baptism, but a mere preparation for it: the Apostle therefore proceeded to admit these converts into the Church, and then to confirm them. Let us reflect on the power of the Spirit of GOD over evil Spirits, as we hear the close of this Lesson, which rebukes "the curious arts," of necromancy and witchcraft,—arts which we have lately seen revived, and which are maintained in just such books as were zealously burned of old by those who had used them, as soon as they were freed from the power of the devil by the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD.

As the whole Book of the Acts is a record of the work of the SPIRIT, and has been called "the Gospel of the HOLY GHOST," we continue to read it, at this season, in the Daily Lessons, and also on Sundays after Trinity Sunday. Indeed, the residue of the year must be conceived of as a continuous commemoration of the SPIRIT, just as the earlier half of the year is dedicated to the Eternal Word. The feast of the Holy Trinity serves as the clasp or bond by which the whole is made a Unit. Thus "the LORD and Giver of Life" receives due honour, while His divine personality and blessed offices are prominently kept in view. May all who profess to worship the SPIRIT do so "in Spirit and in Truth."

Whitsun-Monday.

WHITSUN-WEEK—which falls in the season of flowers, and therefore, even if it be actually in June, in the poetic May of old England—may well be made a week of privilege to children in schools and families. But it should be a week of "joy in the HOLY GHOST," and therefore its spiritual exercises are multiplied and special. Monday and Tuesday are feasts, but Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday are Ember-fasts; and so there is but one day in the seven which is left to the ordinary circuit of the Church's worship. One might almost say that the Seven gifts of the Spirit have each their day of special propriety; and that thus the great feast of the Trinity is ushered in when the fulness of wisdom, and understanding, and counsel, and might, and knowledge, and godliness, and holy fear, has fitted the Church to confess her faith in GOD, in asserting the mystery of His Tri-unity.

This is a fitting week for instructing the young in Confirmation,—which is the anointing of the Spirit and the giving of his Seven-fold grace. Where it is convenient, also, it is a proper week for the reunion of Confirmation classes, under pastoral advice and regulation, to recall past vows and to inquire as to their results.

The Epistle to-day commemorates the first outpouring of the Spirit upon a Gentile,—the Centu-

rion Cornelius. This was, in degree, a minor Pentecost: but its consequences have been immense; for it was the grafting of the wild stock of the Gentiles into the good olive-tree of Israel. The Gospel shows that this was the carrying out of the divine plan, which was not to save the Jews only, but the world. Faith in the SON of GOD, henceforth, makes the true son of faithful Abraham; and, if a man is lost, it is not because of uncircumcision, but because "he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten SON of GOD."

The First Morning Lesson relates the confusion of tongues at Babel, which the gift of tongues, on the day of Pentecost, was meant to remedy. The Second Lesson is St. Paul's exposition of the gifts of the Spirit, in their nature and purpose. Observe, they restore the unity and fellowship which were lost at Babel, and thus out of many nations and tongues is made one Catholic Church.

In the Evening we read of the seventy elders who received the SPIRIT of prophecy under the Law; and in the Second Lesson, of the order and method to which the highest spiritual gifts were subjected in the public worship of the Apostolic Church.

Whitsun-Tuesday.

THE Epistle is the narrative of the first recorded Confirmation,—when the converts whom Philip

the deacon had baptized were visited and blessed by the Apostles with the laying on of hands. Thus, they received the HOLY GHOST, in the fulness of His gifts, having only been so far partakers of the SPIRIT before, as babes in CHRIST,—"not spiritual, but carnal,"—that is, only initiated into spiritual life.

The Gospel, while it connects with Pentecost, is designed to remind us that the HOLY GHOST was sent by the Good Shepherd to the "sheep of His pasture," that they might evermore feed in green pastures and be led by waters of comfort. It is also a Preface to the Ember-fasts and to the Ordaining Sunday, about to follow.

The First Lesson shows the power of the Spirit to qualify whom He will as prophets of the LORD, and sometimes to make evil men vessels of mercy to others; as it is written,—"Is Saul also among the prophets?" In the Second Lesson we should note the precept,—"Quench not the Spirit; despise not prophesyings." We do the one when we resist the motions of divine grace in our consciences; we do the other when we disregard Inspired Scripture or the teachings of its worthy and lawful expounders in the legitimate exercise of their ministry.

At Evening Prayer, the First Lesson appears to have been appointed as contrasting the giving of the Law on tables of stone with the writing of the Gospel on the fleshly tablets of the heart. One sublime passage—which should be compared with

St. Paul's exposition (Rom. x. 6, 7, 8) in the Epistle to the Romans—is specially suited to the time:—"It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it?" In other words, though CHRIST is ascended, His promise is fulfilled: the Spirit has come down, and His truth is with us.

The Second Lesson contrasts the fruits of the Spirit with the works of the flesh. Through the rest of the Christian year, these fruits of the Spirit will be the subjects of the Collects, Gospels, and Epistles.

Ember Days in Whitsuntide.

THOUGH Trinity Sunday is an Ordaining Sunday, it is so not as the Feast of the Trinity, but as the Octave of Pentecost; for the HOLY GHOST came to insure a perpetual succession of Apostles, and pastors, and teachers in the Christian Church, and so to make good the promise of CHRIST to be with His Apostles to the end of the world. It is the Spirit only that can ordain, albeit by means of human hands: as, when Moses ordained Joshua, (Deut. xxxiv. 9,) he "was full of the SPIRIT of Wisdom." The Apostles themselves were not completely empowered till they had received the HOLY GHOST, on the day of Pentecost, to fill up the initial gift (St. John xx. 22, compared with Acts

i. 8) which CHRIST Himself had imparted at Easter Then "the LORD gave the word: great was the company of the preachers."

The fitness of the Pentecostal Season, then, as one of preparation for the commissioning of fresh messengers of the Gospel, must be obvious. Let these days be kept in earnest prayer for all Bishops, pastors, and missionaries. and that those to be ordained may indeed be men "full of the HOLY GHOST and of wisdom." Let us pray that, by their ministry, the HOLY SPIRIT may be communicated, in power and comfort, to nations that still sit in darkness and the shadow of death. It must be a great support to a lonely missionary to feel that he is remembered at a set time; and the Ember-day is eminently Catholic in its spirit, now that we have so many missionaries in so many parts of the world.

"Oh, hold it holy! It will be a bond
Of love and brotherhood when all beside
Hath been dissolved; and, though wide ocean rolls
Between our altars and the Mother Isle,
This shall be our communion. We shall send,
Link'd in one sacred feeling, at one hour,
In the same language, the same prayer to Heaven,
And each remembering each, in piety,
Pray for the other's welfare."

Let us pray also for the sanctification of the educated youth in the colleges of our own land; and let us pray for children, and for babes unborn, that they may be called in due time to con-

tinue the blest succession of labourers in the LORD'S harvest. So shall there be "tongues of fire" once more, in answer to ardent prayer, and other tribes shall sing, with exultation, "We do hear them speak, in our tongues, the wonderful works of GOD."

Trinity Sunday.

THE Church's Services have culminated: to-day they mount up to the throne of the Godhead; for, knowing the SON and the HOLY GHOST, we know the FATHER also, and that these three are not three Gods, but one GOD.

The Church, to-day, celebrates the glory and majesty of GOD in His essence and in His works. In the word Trinity, she simply sums up what is revealed concerning Him,—that in substance He is one, but, in persons, three. In this there is nothing contradictory; for it is not asserted that He is *three* in the same sense in which He is *one*. But yet it is something mysterious; for we know not how this unity of substance consists with the Trinity of persons. Nor do we know any thing of GOD which He has not told us; nor is there any thing told us of GOD which is not mysterious. The FATHER could not make us acquainted with the SON and the SPIRIT without giving us knowledge of mysterious facts in the divine nature. Now,

the Gospel consists in revelations of the SON and of the SPIRIT in their divinity and offices; and thus the Trinity is the fundamental verity of the Gospel. It is taught us not as an enigma nor as an arbitrary communication to faith, but, practically, as the basis of all that we must know and do as Christians.

The Collect enables us to worship the *Unity* which exists in the power of the Divine Majesty, even while we acknowledge the glory of the Eternal Trinity. The Epistle exhibits this "Unity of the Divine Majesty," as beheld by St. John in his visions. ONE sat on the throne—whom the four living-creatures worship in the Trine ascription of Holiness—as we do in the words—

"Holy FATHER, holy SON,
Holy SPIRIT, Three in One."

In the Gospel, observe the text, "I say unto Thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of GOD." Here CHRIST is the speaker, the SPIRIT is spoken of as the Regenerator, and the FATHER is referred to, "whose is the Kingdom;" while all is spoken with reference to baptism "in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST." If GOD is One, these three persons must be one in substance; or into what are we baptized? This same Gospel also rebukes the spirit which with reference to revealed truth asks, *How can these things be?* for, as if providing for this full revelation of

Himself, CHRIST says to the pharisee, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" Observe, too, He who thus spake declared Himself to have "come down from heaven," and yet asserted Himself to be *in heaven* while He was thus speaking. "The Son of Man, Who is in heaven," is the name He gives Himself, while talking to Nicodemus! Surely, then, this is "the man that is *my fellow*, saith the LORD of Hosts"—that is, the man that is equal with GOD.

This Epistle, and this Gospel, are the more striking, because they are the ancient ones for the Octave of Pentecost, and were not specially selected with reference to the Trinity. But Scripture is full of the Trinity, even where it is not seen, at first; as a ray of white light is found to consist of three primary colours. Even so—"GOD is light."

The Ninth Selection of Psalms is often read at Morning Service, on Trinity Sunday; and the Tenth, at Evening Prayer. They are impressive, and appropriate in many respects, to the day, and to the residue of the Services.

The Church now begins to read the Old Testament, anew, and recurs to the first chapter of Genesis. But, lo! the same principle meets us here, in the very first chapter of the Bible, which is the first Lesson. "In the beginning GOD created:"—even here we have a noun plural and verb singular, in the Hebrew—plurality and unity

in the name of GOD, in the very first verse of the Bible. So "the Spirit" moves on the face of the waters! Again, "GOD said, Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness;" and so, "GOD created Man in HIS own image"—plurality and unity, once more.

After this Lesson, detailing the works of Creation, it is common to read or sing, instead of *Te Deum*, the *Benedicite*—"O all ye works of the LORD"—concluding with the *Gloria Patri*, which adapts it to the day, and is rubrical. The Second Lesson is the narrative of our LORD's Baptism, which was a manifestation of the Trinity. The FATHER spake, the SON was manifested as His well-beloved, and the HOLY GHOST descended upon Him, in visible shape.

The Nicene Creed follows, which is the testimony of the Church, as to the "Faith once delivered to the Saints:" and when we say the words "being of one substance with the FATHER," we must remember that this is part of the grand verity which we confess this day.

In the Holy Communion, we profess the substance of the Athanasian Confession, in the words —addressed to the FATHER—"who are one with Thee in Thy Eternal Godhead;" or in the fuller words, omitting the address to the FATHER— "Who art one GOD, one LORD, not only one person, but Three Persons in one substance: for that which we believe of the glory of the FATHER, the

same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality."

The Trinity Hymns are very fine, especially that one produced by the piety and orthodoxy of our own Anglo-American Church:—

> "O Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,
> Bright in Thy deeds and in Thy Name!"

The First Evening Lesson continues the story of the Creation; and the Second is St. John's emphatic assertion of the Trinity, which he also expounds, and interweaves with all truth, in the same chapter. It is not a single text, but the whole of Scripture, which teaches the Triune God, for we read it in the very first chapter of the Bible, in the morning, and now we find it in one of the last. How truly we say, then, "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end!" Amen.

Sunday, First after Trinity.

So far we have seen that the "Son of God was manifested;" now we are to learn, in action, how He "destroyed the works of the devil." The first half of the year is devoted to doctrine primarily, and to duty as seen in direct relation to doctrine. So, the second half is devoted to duty primarily, and to doctrine only as reduced to practical piety.

Thus is the Christian year divided between the Creed and the Decalogue.

In the Seasons that succeed Advent, until Trinity Sunday, we perceive a sort of spiritual impulse, by which we are borne along our holy way with scarcely a sense of effort. It is because our affections become warmed, and our feelings healthfully excited, by the peculiar joys of those successive feasts and fasts. But now we have reached a season in which no such impulse is supplied; in which our spiritual joys must be purely those of faith and duty; and in which physical, as well as spiritual, efforts must be made if we would keep our souls alive and growing.

Here, then, we have a chance to try the comparative amount of *feeling* and of *principle*, regarded as constituents of our religious character. And we may be sure that if our sense of duty is less active than it should be; if we do not now accomplish from *principle* what heretofore we may have cheerfully done from *feeling;* then it is evident that our religion is greatly defective, and is less a thing of the deep heart, than of the superficial sense or emotions.

The very first thing, then, in addressing ourselves to a life of practical piety, is to feel our natural weakness, and our need of grace; in view of the fact that the habitual keeping of the Commandments of God, and not the ardour of our pious sentiments, is the criterion of real piety. This all-important principle is, in the Collect for

this day, turned into a prayer. Like the rod of Aaron, the rod and staff of our Creed must now blossom and bear fruit in piety; so we pray for the life-giving Spirit, that we, who are by nature dead in sin, may become plants of grace, in the garden of GOD.

The principle that love to GOD and love to man are the whole of duty is enlarged upon in the Epistle. In the Gospel, we have a powerful motive to holy living, in one of the sublimest of all the intimations of inspiration, with respect to the state of the Dead between death and judgment. It is called a parable, but improperly. CHRIST gives it as a history, and it is deficient in the essential part of a parable—that is, an allegorical element, or similitude. But, even allowing it to be a parable, it is not less instructive as to the invisible world, in which the souls of the departed await the great day of accounts. CHRIST could not have given us a parable to mislead us on a point so momentous. It seems, then, that there is a common *Hades*, or receptacle of departed spirits, where the nobler part of man's nature is alive, before GOD, while the body moulders in the earth, or perishes in the sea. There the righteous repose, and the wicked are tormented; and there is a gulf between them, so that there is no change of place possible for either. When the trumpet sounds, the souls of the blessed shall reanimate their bodies, in a new form, and the souls of the wicked shall "reap corruption," in rising to

"shame and everlasting contempt." Then comes the judgment; the righteous go into the mansion prepared where CHRIST sitteth at the right hand of the FATHER; and the wicked are driven into outer darkness. In this final doom, "both soul and body are cast into hell," but, in the intermediate place, it is only the soul that suffers. In this intermediate place, the righteous are in "Paradise," or in "Abraham's bosom;" but, in their final reward, they "inherit the kingdom," and receive the consummation of their happiness, as sons of GOD. The intermediate place is called *Sheol*, and *Hades*, in the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures; but the final place of the lost, where "their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched," is called *Tophet*, or *Gehenna*.

The great difference between a religion of feeling, and one of principle, which we have already noted, is powerfully exhibited in the reply of Abraham to the poor Sadducee, who imagined that his brethren would awake from their delusions, if they should actually see a body raised from the dead. They might be greatly excited by such a phenomenon, but the Holy Scriptures—even of the Old Testament—contain a much more valuable confirmation of true religion, than such an event would be. However, in due time CHRIST did call one named Lazarus from the dead; and then it was seen that so far from convincing wicked men, it only stimulated them to crucify the LORD of Glory! They who searched the

Scriptures, though they never saw Lazarus, were, on the other hand, made wise unto salvation.

The Lessons of this solemn Sunday are in keeping with this Gospel. The origin of sin in the world, the sentence of death, and the promise of a SAVIOUR, are all contained in the First Morning Lesson, and the First Evening Lesson narrates the judgment of the Flood, a figure and type of the judgment yet to come. While the Second Lesson at Morning Prayer records the beginning of St. Paul's spiritual life, at Evening Prayer it is the song of victory, in which he anticipates its close. This is a noble burst of inspired poetry, in which the Apostle exhorts believers to a life of holiness in word and deed; in profession and in principle. The Gospel for the day revives in its awful argument, and seems to set Lazarus and Dives again before us, as we read the passage, "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out: . . . but they that *will be rich* fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition."

In view of the grand unity of the day's Services, and of its teachings concerning Hades, an appropriate Introit will be found in the 49th Psalm,—"They lie in hell like sheep: death gnaweth upon them." This whole Psalm seems made to fit the Gospel for the day. But the Old Introit is the first part of the 119th Psalm,—a Psalm divided into two-and-twenty equal parts, in the original,

each one marked by a Hebrew letter, with which letter every verse in the corresponding part begins. These parts are accordingly distributed through the two-and-twenty Sundays succeeding Trinity Sunday as appropriate Introits; and very wisely, for they all relate to the *keeping of the Commandments*, which we have seen to be the spirit of the Season. It is the remark of Archbishop Leighton that this Psalm hath in it a threefold universality of obedience,—the whole man subjected to the whole law for the whole of his life. Feet, mouth, heart, are all expressly devoted to keep all the commandments unto the end. Other portions of the Psalms—which may serve as Introits on particular Sundays, or which may be used in the same service, or at least on the same day, with the regular Introits, shall be noted occasionally.

Sunday, Second after Trinity.

THERE is a complete philosophy of life in the idea of the Collect to-day. "The steadfast fear and love of GOD," are all we need be anxious about. Let us insure this, and GOD will do the rest for us. We shall be under the protection of His good providence, and all things shall work together in our behalf.

The Epistle teaches us the love of GOD, and how it ought to operate in making us love our fellow-

men. The Gospel persuades us to be in earnest in accepting the call of God to the Great Supper which divine love has prepared. The excuses of men, who plead their ordinary business, their extraordinary enterprises, and even their social relations, as if these could justify them in neglect of duty, are detailed and rebuked. So it was in the days of Noah; and hence the First Lesson has a bearing on the Gospel. It sets forth the Covenant relations of the believer with his God, and teaches us to regard the natural phenomenon of the rainbow, in connection with the rainbow round the throne of God. It is quite possible that the rainbow had never before been seen, though this is not asserted. Observe the sanctity of human blood, as proclaimed to Noah, and reflect, if the blood of any man is so precious, because he is created in the image of God, how much more the blood of Him who is "the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person"! The Second Lesson teaches us not to call any man common or unclean, and shows us the power of the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin. It must be noted, that although the Holy Spirit was poured out on the first Gentiles, miraculously, the sacrament of Baptism was not omitted. St. Peter's argument is that as it was now satisfactorily proved that Gentiles might be partakers of the Spirit, no man could forbid the outward sign. The inward grace is ordinarily associated with this sign, but in this instance it could only express, ritually, what

was already done; and yet it could not be dispensed with.

In connection with the rainbow it may be well to remark that we are indebted for the true philosophy of the phenomenon, to De Dominis, a Dalmatian bishop of the seventeenth century, who left the Romish communion, and joined the Church of England. He is said to have died in the Inquisition.

In the First Evening Lesson, we have the Covenant with Abraham, and the record of that faith which was counted unto Him for righteousness. In the vision of the smoking furnace and the burning lamp, amid "the horrour of great darkness," there seems to be a sublime intimation that, in the furnace of affliction, GOD would visit His children in Egypt, and that, in the darkness of their captivity, there should be "light in their dwellings;" the light of His presence, and of His Covenant. Let this example of GOD'S fidelity to His Covenant illustrate the nature of a "steadfast fear and love" of GOD, in dependence upon His promises; and with this connect the text, in the Second Lesson, "If we deny Him, He also will deny us: if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself."

Sunday, Third after Trinity.

In the Collect we entreat God, as the author of our good desires, to hear the prayers we offer, and to comfort and defend us accordingly. The idea is that as the very desire to pray is given us of God, it is an earnest, or pledge, of His readiness to help. It is a very great encouragement when we find ourselves disposed to seek God in prayer; the Holy Spirit has suggested the desire, and that is, of itself, a proof that God is ready to hear, and to answer. When He is about to give good gifts to His children, He is wont to move them to ask for such gifts, for this is the condition on which good things may be safely bestowed.

The Epistle shows the disposition of mind and heart with which prayers should be made. If we ask in pride, and in a spirit of dictation to God, we shall ask in vain. Our greatest dangers are those which come from our spiritual enemy, and these should always be before us in asking to be delivered from evil.

In the Gospel, we learn that Christ was once reproached for receiving sinners, and allowing them to eat with Him. He shows, to our unspeakable comfort, that sinners are the objects of His redeeming love; and that if we are sinners, we have a claim on His mercy, because He is the Saviour of sinners. Let those who talk about

becoming communicants "when they are good enough" reflect that CHRIST still receiveth sinners at His Table. Let them come as sinners; like the publican, and not like the pharisee; in penitence, and shame, and self-abasement, and there will be joy among the angels of GOD, "who need no repentance."

To-day we begin to read the history of Joseph, one of the most eloquent of all the Scripture narratives, and one of the most instructive. It abounds in striking analogies with the History of CHRIST Himself; as in the sale of Joseph at the instance of Judah, (or Judas,) albeit in the case of the patriarch the guilt was comparatively slight, and was even mingled with mercy. The "coat of many colours" was a token of primogeniture and of priesthood in the patriarchal family: hence the children of Leah felt that an act of injustice had been done to them and to their mother, in the preference given to the eldest son of the beloved Rachel. Thus they justified themselves, no doubt; as the Jews did in destroying CHRIST, through pretended zeal for Moses and the Levitical priesthood. CHRIST'S raiment "dipped in blood" was forefigured, therefore, by that of Joseph. So, in the Evening Lesson, from Genesis, the exaltation of Joseph, after imprisonment and virtual death, is a type of CHRIST'S Resurrection and Ascension.

At the same time, these Lessons are a very important exposition, touching the mysterious

dealings of Providence. Jacob had sinned in youth, in deceiving his father Isaac; now, in turn, his own sons deceive him. They also defeat their own plans, by their wickedness; and GOD overrules all for good, when He has punished them for their sins, and prepared them to receive His blessings. Observe Jacob's rash expression, "All these things are against me." How often we misinterpret Providence, and charge GOD foolishly, for the very dealings which are working out our permanent happiness and insuring the answer to our prayers!

In the Second Morning Lesson, observe that "the disciples were called CHRISTIANS first at Antioch:" and the first record we have of these "Christians" is that of an act of fraternal charity, such as made the heathens say, "See how these Christians love one another." In the Second Evening Lesson we have a picture of the times in which we are now living; "perilous times, in the last days." We are warned against "itching ears"—the desire of novelty in religion, and against the teachers who pander to the itching ear. Observe that "sound doctrine" is a thing *not endured* by those who "heap to themselves teachers;" that is, who ordain their own pastors, and refuse the Apostolic Church and ministry. We have here the clear intimation of a definite Creed, and a regular and authorized ministry. Note, too, the Apostle's noble eulogy of Holy Scripture, and the portrait of a truly Evangelical Bishop. How

sublimely he sums up the record of his own ministry, and anticipates his reward! What volumes of instruction as to the Apostolic work we find in the single sentence, "I have kept THE FAITH!"

Sunday, Fourth after Trinity.

THINGS temporal in their justly insignificant proportion to the things eternal are brought before us to-day, not only in the Collect, but in the entire Services. Observe, in the pathetic conclusion of Joseph's story, how truly GOD is the protector of all that trust in Him, and how safe it is, by Joseph's example, to subordinate all worldly circumstances, whether of adversity or of fortune, to the simple rule of duty. Singularly suitable as an Introit, this day, is part of the 105th Psalm, which teaches trust in GOD, and "patient continuance in well-doing," by the example of Joseph, "whose feet they hurt in the stocks: the iron entered into his soul: until the time came that his cause was known, the word of the LORD tried him."

In the Epistle we are taught that all created things, or the whole creation—for such is the meaning of "the creature"—are now, like Joseph, in bondage, waiting for the day when the sons of GOD shall be glorified. Even things temporal, after the earth and all that is in it shall have been

burned up, are to be reproduced in higher forms, fitted to our glorified nature, in "the new heavens and the new earth," which are promised to the faithful. As we wait for the resurrection of the body, so we wait for the glorious mansions which are to be fitted for the immortal forms in which we shall be clothed to all eternity. Now, in the Gospel, we find certain rules for passing through things temporal, which are not the rules of our natural characters: but if by grace we mortify the works of the flesh, in keeping these precepts, we shall pass safely through time, and be infinitely recompensed in Eternity. How did our SAVIOUR live on earth? What was His portion here? "The disciple is not above his master," and we must take poverty and contempt, if need be, as our Master took them. In proportion as we become "perfect through sufferings," we become more and more like our Master: and we shall be like Him in glory, if we are like Him in humility and submission.

In the Second Morning Lesson we are warned, by the vanities of the heathen which the Apostles reproved, to recognise GOD in nature, and the moral force with which He has invested earthly things, if we choose to study them. In the Second Evening Lesson is set forth the spiritual life, in its relations to divers classes of men, "teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this

present world—looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great GOD and our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST."

Sunday, Fifth after Trinity.

GODLY quietness is the subject of the Collect, and the way to insure it is pointed out in the Epistle. The Gospel sheds light upon those other words of the Collect, in which the peaceable ordering of the world, for the good of the Church, is ascribed to the power of GOD. CHRIST in the ship of Peter, with His Apostles, gives us a lively image of that Holy Apostolic Church, which is the Ark of souls. So the long and patient toil of the Apostles, without any reward, is an image of the patient perseverance required of those who "fish for men." The ultimate success which rewarded them, at the command of JESUS, teaches us the faithfulness of CHRIST, in blessing the labours of His servants; and St. Peter's adoration of CHRIST, with his ejaculation, "I am a sinful man, O LORD," shows us how a successful pastor ought to feel humbled in the moment of his greatest reward, ascribing all to GOD, and wondering that GOD should employ a poor sinner to call sinners to repentance. The expression "Depart from me" is a strong ejaculation of humility; as much as to say, I am afraid to find myself in the presence of the Holy GOD

But the Apostle probably had in his thoughts the language of the prophet Habakkuk, "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity. . . . They sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag." His conduct, therefore, is a lesson to all "fishers of men."

> "To our own nets ne'er bow we down;
> Lest, on the eternal shore,
> The angels, while our draught they own,
> Reject us evermore."

The Lessons from Genesis conclude the history of the patriarch Jacob. In the morning, we have the grand prophetic ode, in which he gives an outline of the history of the twelve tribes of Israel. Observe, however, that "the testimony of JESUS is the spirit of prophecy." Closely as some parts of this prophecy apply to the patriarchs, the scope of all is the bringing in of the Messiah,—"that I may tell you that which shall befall you, in the last days."

Thus, what is said of Levi, with Simeon, is a prophecy of the day when the council of the chief priests and rulers rejected CHRIST, and when the Jewish priesthood was itself rejected of GOD. "In their anger they slew a man,"—the man CHRIST JESUS. In the words respecting Judah, we may discern the foreshadowing of that Great High-Priest that "sprang out of Judah," called, in the Apocalypse, "the lion of the tribe of Judah," and here foretold under the name of Shiloh—the Prince

of Peace. Like a painter, who groups around a portrait whatever illustrates the character or achievements of the subject, the prophet makes his background reveal "an ass's colt tied"—the sign of Shiloh's coming, in that day when "the sceptre departed from Judah," and when the "gathering of the people" unto CHRIST fulfilled for a moment this rapturous prediction. "The blood of grapes" is a not less significant image of the "true Vine"—who stained His raiment in His own blood. How sublimely this reappears in the last Book of the Scriptures, in the portrait of the "Faithful and True" who "was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood." We must not fail to note these sublime apostrophes: "I have waited for Thy salvation, O LORD," and, "From thence is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel." The whole of Joseph's blessing applies to the humanity of Him who was the carpenter's son—the son of Joseph—and particularly to His Passion, and His Ascension. The words concerning Benjamin have been beautifully applied to St. Paul, who was of that tribe; who in his youth "ravined as a wolf" against the Church, and "devoured the prey," in the stoning of St. Stephen, but who afterwards was made the great instrument of fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy, "I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong." CHRIST'S empire was wrested from Cæsar's. In the Evening Lesson, Joseph's prophecy, "GOD will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my

bones from hence," has been considered prophetic of the Advent of CHRIST, as well as of that of Moses; and Joseph's wish to have his bones laid in the land of promise, may possibly be connected with the fact that "many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves, after His resurrection."

In the Second Lesson, observe, in the morning, how richly instructive is the whole history of the Council at Jerusalem, concerning the constitution of the Apostolic Church. St. James presides, as bishop of the See where the Council met. St. Peter, with all his pre-eminence, is but a fellow-councillor—not a "lord over GOD'S heritage." In the Evening, observe closely the Apostle's exposition of the Atonement, and note especially the words, "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the SON of GOD!"

Sunday, Sixth after Trinity.

THE transcendent blessedness prepared for the righteous is recognised in the Collect as the reward of love to GOD. None but they who love GOD above all things can have the promises which exceed all things in desirableness. Old Richard Rolle, of Hampole, one of the Evangelical lights of the Church of England, who lived five hundred

years ago, expressed the joys of heaven, as follows:—

"There is life without any death;
And there is youth without any eld;
And there is peace without any strife,
And there is all manner liking of life;
And there is bright summer ever to see,
And there is never winter in that countrie.
And there is more worship and more honour,
Than ever had king or emperour;
And there is great melodie of angels' song,
And there is praising them among;
And there is all manner friendship that may be:
And there is ever perfect love, and charitie!
All these a man may joys of Heaven call;
And yet the most sovereign joy of all,
Is the sight of GOD'S *bright face,*
In whom resteth all manner of grace."

But the Collect is finer poetry than even this precious morsel of olden piety and genius, and is designed to suggest to us what it is to be the "Children of the Resurrection."

Observe, then, in the Epistle, what is said of "the likeness of His resurrection," in which we shall see GOD, if we see Him at all, for "without holiness no man shall see the LORD;" that is, in His unveiled Glory and Majesty, which is the joy of the Saints. The Gospel gives us the warning that not all who think themselves fit for this heavenly joy shall enter into it; and it concludes with an awful assurance that there is a place for

the ungodly, as well as a place for the righteous. It also shows that there is a righteousness which needs to be repented of; that is to say, self-righteousness, as a substitute for the righteousness of CHRIST. Love to our fellow-men is then insisted on, as a part of the marriage-raiment which will be required of us at the banquet of the Lamb, and which is therefore a requisite for admission to the Lord's Supper, its foretaste here on the earth. The Christian Altar, and its Offertory, are expressly mentioned: for whatever these words might have been temporarily applied to when they were uttered, there can be no question as to their force, when they were *written*, by the Spirit, after Jewish altars had ceased to be holy, and when the words of CHRIST were recorded for the obedience of Christians, in all time.

In the First Morning Lesson occurs that great text which implies the Resurrection, as our SAVIOUR showed, when He blamed the Sadducees for not understanding it. How much of Holy Scripture we also fail to see in its true bearings! Had not CHRIST Himself expounded it so, should we have seen that GOD's words, "I am the GOD of Abraham, the GOD of Isaac, and the GOD of Jacob" imply their present living in the Spirit, and their hold on certain promises, which can only be fulfilled in their resurrection? Observe also the name of Jehovah's self-existence—I AM, which CHRIST claimed to Himself, when He said, "Before Abraham was, I AM." Observe, too, that GOD's

foreknowledge was no more than foreknowledge: He laid no necessity on Pharaoh, but He provided for what, to men, would have been his *probable* conduct. To GOD, nothing can be a mere probability; for it is His attribute to know how the free will of His creatures is going to exert itself. Pharaoh, as we see in the Evening Lesson, was a cruel and godless man, and the residue of his history is just like what we note in other historical characters. GOD gave him up to his own lusts, and they became his ruin.

In the Second Morning Lesson, observe that the UNKNOWN GOD of the heathen is the I AM of the Faithful. In the Lesson from the Hebrews, note the unity of the Faith from the beginning of the world unto the end of time. CHRIST is the one object; for Abel signified this, in his lamb of sacrifice; and Abraham even foresaw the Resurrection of CHRIST; while Moses, as we see by the Old Testament Lessons, "esteemed the reproach of CHRIST greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." Observe, also, the practical character of justifying faith. All these believers *did* something that showed faith,—not merely felt something, by which they imagined themselves justified.

Sunday, Seventh after Trinity.

THIS is the Sunday of Nutrition, as the old Latin of the ancient Collect makes apparent. In the English we have the same idea in the words "*Nourish* us with all goodness," which connects with (the Gospel for the day) St. Mark's account of one of the miracles of loaves and fishes. Observe the sublime climax of the Collect; and let its inspiring call upon GOD, as "the LORD of all power and might," excite thee, as with the sound of a trumpet.

In the Epistle, the great text is the concluding one, "The gift of GOD is eternal life." Satan pays wages, and his wages is death; GOD rewards His servants so richly that it is all a free gift; no man can merit it; but CHRIST has merited it, and we receive it through Him. The Gospel shows the rich provision, which is made for all the world, in CHRIST, as the Bread of Life. There is "bread enough and to spare;" none need go empty away. Observe, too, the Apostolic communion, beautifully symbolized in the companies, each fed by an Apostle, and all deriving from JESUS the ever living and growing food. In the loaves, we see our spiritual food, but in the fishes our spiritual drink, for they are emblems of the living water which flows from CHRIST, being "born of water," and finding their whole life in that element.

The early Christians used the sign of the fish as a Christian emblem, for this reason; and because the Greek word ICHTHYS (a fish) is formed of the Greek initials of the words JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD, SAVIOUR. Observe the compassion of CHRIST for needy and perishing men; and forget not what is written, "We love Him, because He first loved us."

In the Morning Lesson, from Exodus, it is written that "the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart." The same sun that melts wax turns clay into a stone. It is written, in the preceding chapter, that Pharaoh hardened his own heart; and so we learn the whole dreadful secret. No man's heart is ever hardened, till he has himself prepared it, by resisting mercy, to turn GOD'S chastisements into a pretext for fresh revolt. Then GOD takes His Holy Spirit from the sinner, and gives him up to himself. When we pray, in the Litany, to be delivered "from hardness of heart," we recognise our own danger of being given up to it unless we continue to pray. On this *Seventh* Sunday, let us remember, we read of the *Seventh* plague, the thunder and the hail, certainly the sublimest of all the judgments of GOD upon Egypt. The state of the crops, as recorded, agrees with the time of the Passover, when the barley-sheaf was always to be waved, in the temple, by the high-priest.

In the Second Lesson, we read that, though St. Paul was to be the preacher, the disciples "came together to break bread." This connects with the

Gospel for the day, and shows us how important a part of the Gospel is the "eating *often* of that bread," and so "showing forth the LORD'S death, until He come." We must note, also, that St. Paul had kept his Easter at Philippi; that this was the Second Sunday after Easter; and that he was making great exertion to keep his Pentecost at Jerusalem. His sermon to the presbyters of Ephesus is a fitting prelude to his two Epistles to Timothy, (their apostle,) and shows how clearly distinguished were the offices of presbyters and bishops from the beginning, although the title of "overseers" was common to both orders, as the term *pastors* is at the present day. The fervour and unction of the Apostle's language in this charge make it one of the most eloquent of all his exhortations. Nor should we fail to reflect on the fact, that for three whole years, night and day, and with tears, St. Paul declares that he had warned the primitive Christians against the approaching heresies and schisms which false brethren were to excite. To these warnings we owe, under GOD, much of that spirit which wrestled with heresy, as with heathenism, through all the primitive ages, and which preserved the faith entire as we have it in the Nicene Creed.

In the First Evening Lesson we remark, that amid the gross darkness of the world, the children of GOD still have "light in their dwellings." They have Holy Scripture, and the Covenants of CHRIST; and their homes, like the swallow's nest, are hung

about the altar and the temple. The true faith of CHRIST is expounded in the Second Lesson, in its essential doctrine and morality; and it is to be noted that there is hardly a truth necessary to salvation which is not contained in this single Lesson. Let the Creed be made a key to its meaning, and it will be found a casket, full of the richest treasures of knowledge and godliness.

Sunday, Eighth after Trinity.

THERE is a marked coincidence between the Epistle and Gospel. "The Sons of God," says the former, are they that are "led by the Spirit of GOD," or, in other words, they that bring forth "the fruits of the SPIRIT." So the Gospel says, "by their fruits ye shall know them." Instead of sowing to the flesh, therefore, or listening to "false prophets, that come to us in sheep's clothing," teaching worldly wisdom, as if "gain were godliness," we commit ourselves entirely to the care and providence of GOD, and, in the Collect, leave it to Him to decide what is good for us, and what is hurtful. In the spirit of this beautiful prayer it may be we are asking GOD to give us poverty, and sorrow, and sickness, and death; for GOD may know that the reverse would work our eternal loss. But this is the spirit of every true prayer, "Thy will be done." The worldly-minded, on

the other hand, proudly dictate to GOD, in their hearts, if not in words. They "*will* be rich," and they "fall into temptation and a snare;" GOD gives them their heart's desire, and sends leanness into their souls.

> "But, O Thou bounteous Giver of all good,
> Give what Thou canst, without Thee we are poor,
> And with Thee rich, take what Thou wilt away."

In the First Lesson we note that the same cloud which gave light by night to Israel, was darkness to the Egyptians. So it is with all the providences of GOD: they are baleful to His enemies, and blessed to His friends, come in what shape they may. In the Second Lesson, observe how the same truth of a coming Judgment, which filled St. Paul with joy, made Felix tremble. Poor Drusilla, who sat by Felix's side, was a wicked woman, and was also destined to an awful foretaste of judgment, even in this world, for she perished in the terrible visitation that overthrew Herculaneum and Pompeii. She was a Jewess, and had heard Paul preach "concerning the faith in CHRIST." In that terrible hour, did the Apostle's warnings come to mind, and did she call upon the Crucified, amid the terrours of fire and brimstone which burned up those cities of the ungodly? Let us forbear to suppose that they were "sinners above all others, because they suffered such things."

In the First Evening Lesson we have "the song

of Moses and the Lamb," in its typical form as the song of Moses over the triumph of the Paschal Lamb in Egypt. A more glorious song of Moses and the Lamb is to be sung by all the faithful, in the mount of GOD, when the last enemy is slain, and when death and hell are thrown into the lake of fire. We ought to note that Miriam, who leads the chorus of the female saints, bears the name of Mary, the Mother of our LORD, and the sweet singer of the *Magnificat*. It can hardly be without meaning, that in this connection her name is again mentioned in "Marah;" which only became a fountain of life to the children of GOD, by virtue of a living Branch, which sweetened the bitter waters. So Mary rejoiced in her SON, as Her SAVIOUR; for He alone healed her natural corruption, and made her pure and holy, and fit to be the instrument of the LORD, in fulfilling His promise, that "the SEED of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." In the beautiful words, "I am the LORD that healeth thee," we see the promise of a SAVIOUR to heal the world, embittered and poisoned by sin. We have also a hint of the immediate work undertaken by GOD, in conducting the children of Israel forty years through the wilderness. It was to heal them; to purify them of their carnal lusts, and to make them a holy seed. Here was a type of the Gospel: the twelve wells and the seventy palm-trees of Elim being, also, emblems of the twelve Apostles and the seventy Disciples, whose gifts of healing were

made the tokens of CHRIST's first Advent to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The Second Lesson is a fitting pendant to the first; for the Paschal song of Moses is here made the song of the Lamb, in the words of St. Paul concerning "JESUS CHRIST, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever," and in his exposition of the Jewish sacrifices, as setting forth the cross and the blood of the everlasting Covenant. Observe, the Cross is called "the reproach of CHRIST," and we are bidden to bear it; not, indeed, materially, but in lives crucified to the world. The reality of the Christian altar is also asserted, and its superiority to the altar of Mosaic sacrifices is implied. The LORD's Table is the Christian altar, and they only have a right to eat of it who "glory in the Cross," as St. Paul did; being willing to suffer shame for the Crucified, and to offer their souls and bodies a living sacrifice to the Paschal Lamb who was sacrificed for us.

Sunday, Ninth after Trinity.

WHETHER the thoughtful wisdom of men, or rather the providential guidance of the LORD, is to be credited with the careful arrangement and succession of Scriptures in this day's Services, it may be difficult to say. Wisdom and skill are,

nevertheless, conspicuous throughout, as the devout worshipper cannot fail to see.

In the First Lesson, at Morning Prayer, we have the history of Korah's rebellion. Now, observe, Korah was a Levite, or deacon, and Dathan and Abiram were conspicuous laymen. They thought they might take the priesthood upon themselves, and that Aaron was a proud prelate, who had "lifted himself above the congregation of the LORD." Thus they became Congregationalists, or Independents. Their pretext was (precisely that of the Puritans in England in the seventeenth century) that "*all the congregation were holy*, every one of them, and the LORD was among them." They insisted that no priesthood was necessary. It was true then, as it is now, that, in a certain sense, the Laity were part of the priesthood: GOD had said, (Exod. xix. 6,) "Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests," just as in the New Testament it is said of all Christians, "Ye are a royal priesthood." But observe how Moses answered this pretext. To Korah and the Levites he showed the dignity of their *diaconate*, and the presumption of their intruding further into the priest's office. To the laymen, Dathan and Abiram, he addressed another expostulation. To all he said,—in defence of the High-Priesthood bestowed on Aaron exclusively,—"The LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of my own mind." It was GOD's own ordinance that there should be a separate priesthood,

and this the LORD Himself showed, once and forever, by His judgment on Korah and his company. So, in the New Testament, it is written, "No man taketh this honour to himself but he that is called of GOD, as was Aaron." The sin of "heaping to themselves teachers" is censured by St. Paul; and the "gainsaying of Korah" is rebuked by St. Jude, as a sin which may be repeated under the Gospel Hence, the Apostolic Priesthood is shown to stand in a position similar to that of the Aaronic priesthood under the Law.

In the Second Lesson, St. Paul pleads before Agrippa; and while we cannot enumerate the inexhaustible subjects of his discourse, we must note in this connection the story of his own extraordinary call to the Apostleship. Such a call can only be made by miracle. He relates the particulars of his call by CHRIST personally, and repeats the very words of his ordination, "Unto whom now *I send thee:*" in the Greek—*make thee an Apostle.* To this special and miraculous commission St. Paul refers, when he declares himself "an Apostle, not of men, neither *by man*, but by JESUS CHRIST, and GOD the FATHER, who raised Him from the dead." He would have been a false Apostle had his commission been "*of* men;" but he might have received a valid commission "by man," as Timothy did; but it was his privilege to have received it directly, as the eleven Apostles did, from the risen Redeemer. And this he often asserts, for his enemies pretended to doubt it, and

seem to have put him to the proofs of his extraordinary call, which he is always ready to produce. (See Phil. i. 16, 17; Gal. i. 20; I. Cor. ix. 1, 2; II. Cor. xii. 12.) All this shows the necessity of a regular Apostolic ordination, or of miraculous credentials, on the part of those who undertake to minister to men as "ambassadors of CHRIST."

Now comes the Collect, imploring grace that we may "think and do, always, such things as are right;" and "be enabled to live according to GOD's will." The Epistle, as it were, taking up the history of Korah's murmuring, teaches us that "these things happened unto them for examples; and *they are written for our admonition*, upon whom the ends of the world are come." GOD will not again open the earth to avenge the precepts of the Moral Law, nor yet to enforce again His despised ordinances; but the warning is *written*, expressly, that we may be admonished. Observe, too, it was CHRIST, not Moses, against whom sin was committed even under the Law: the Apostle says "that Rock was CHRIST," and that "they tempted CHRIST." Is it not a suggestive thought, that those Christians who have rejected the Apostolic ministry and started a purely congregational one, have so commonly, in the course of time, rejected CHRIST? We must not fail to recognise the eminent piety of many who, in modern times, have been involved, by birth, education, or misconception of duty, in the evil consequences of schisms, which they did not make, and which they would not have made.

God has greatly blessed *the individuals*, but He has not blessed their systems. These have commonly died out, in endless divisions, or in blank Socinianism. Take the instances of Geneva and Holland, and New England. "Wherefore," says the Epistle, "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." God has provided ample means of grace, and in every kind of temptation there is a way of escape.

The Gospel is that parable of the unjust steward, which is "hard to be understood." The worldly wisdom of this bad man suggested to him the importance of providing for the day of want, which he saw coming: being a bad man, he used bad means; but he prepared himself a home, among those whom he had obliged. Now, why should the children of God suffer a bad man to rebuke them, at least in this point, his wise and careful provision for the future? As a day is coming when we shall be turned out of our stewardship, why should we not be good and faithful stewards, on the like principle of forethought? By using our own means, as the bad steward used his master's, we may make ourselves friends in many a poor Lazarus, who in the day of our death will welcome us to Abraham's bosom.

Let us note that "the lord" who commended the unjust steward, is not the Lord Jesus Christ, but his own lord, or master, who confessed that he was, at least, a shrewd fellow, and had made a prudent arrangement for himself, however un-

principled the means. We are to understand that it was a regular bargain, on the basis of the suggestion which is only once recorded. He said to each of these debtors, "I will give you a receipt, for so much, provided, if it should come to my master's ears, and he should turn me away, you will give me a home, till I can find some other means of subsistence." In this matter of forethought, worldly men, says our SAVIOUR, are, in their way of doing things, and on their limited scale of providing for themselves, far wiser than those whose aims are professedly towards an everlasting futurity, but who often fail in turning their present opportunities to the best advantage, in preparing for it. Bad men often rebuke good Christians, by their superior zeal, and forethought, in the concerns for which they profess to live. If in higher concerns, and by better courses, and on a nobler scale, Christians would be as thoughtful, they would secure a glorious inheritance in the day of their departure from this life.

In the First Evening Lesson, we begin the history of Balaam, a bad man, and a false prophet; who sinned against his own conscience, for the sake of reward. He is coupled with Korah, by St. Jude. Observe, when a man will not take a plain intimation of duty from GOD, but tries to bend GOD's will to his own, GOD often gives him his way, and yet is displeased with him, and sends him warnings and chastisements. The miracle of "the ass speaking with man's voice," is often carped

at; but it is important to note that it is reaffirmed in the New Testament, (II. Peter ii. 16,) and also that it explains the principle on which Balaam's own mouth was afterwards opened in prophecy GOD, who used even a dumb animal to rebuke a false prophet, used Balaam and Caiaphas (who had made themselves "as natural brute beasts") to utter his own words, and to rebuke the incredulity and madness of men. Hence, the "gift of tongues" is no proof of divine favour, and a man may be a preacher, without being saved at last. So, too, we read in the Second Lesson, from the severely practical St. James, "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;" and again, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only." Obedience is the law of holiness; and "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft," (or sorcery,) which was one of the sins of Balaam.

Sunday, Tenth after Trinity.

IT was the plan of Providence, by the deliverance of Israel, and the humiliation of the great empire of Egypt, to call the surrounding nations to a knowledge of the true GOD.

The overruling of Balaam's efforts to curse Israel, and the sublime prophecies which GOD put into his mouth, making "the wrath of man to praise Him," are very instructive to a devout

worshipper, and not less consoling to the faithful. There is something so magnificent in the scenery of the history, and, in the language of the inspired historian, there is such a pictorial effect, that few of the Lessons of the year are more capable of being read to the congregation with command over the feelings of old and young together. The group on the mountains, the smoking altars, and the wild prophetic rapture of Balaam, with the mute astonishment of Balak and the Moabite princes, are strikingly contrasted with the scene below,—the white tents of Israel, the banners of their army, and the holy place of the Tabernacle, over which hangs the mysterious cloud, a shade by day, and a light by night. Especially in the Evening Lesson, where Balaam is forced to abandon himself to the spirit of prophecy, let us note his impressive utterances, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!" "There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel." In these words the Moabites, and other Oriental nations, perceived a prophecy of universal dominion, to be granted to the offspring of Jacob. They kept the oracle among themselves till the star appeared at the Epiphany of CHRIST, and then the Wise Men sought out the promised Seed. With this prophecy, also, must be taken the obscure words, "*He shall pour the water out of His buckets*, and His Seed shall be in many waters." St. Cyprian reminded the Jews that this was an admitted testimony to the divinity

of the Messiah; for when the Jews speak of "water poured from the bucket" they mean a son begotten in the image of his father, the same water being in the bucket at the well, and in the vessel which it fills.

In the Second Morning Lesson we read of the passage of the Gospel into Italy, by the ministry of St. Paul, and of the marvellous providences attending it. It so happened that when St. Paul arrived in Rome, Bran, the father of Caractacus, was there, like himself a prisoner, with other Britons who had been left by Caractacus as hostages. It is asserted that Bran was converted by St. Paul, and was the first who brought the Gospel into England; for when "Bran the Blessed" returned, in the year 58, to his Welsh home, certain presbyters went with him, and some suppose St. Paul himself accompanied them. Let us remember this when we hear the words, "The salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and they will hear it." The existing Episcopate of England was of later origin; but it is a great mistake to suppose that the primitive British Church ever became extinct. Its pure and ancient faith became incorporated with the Anglo-Saxon Church, and so, afterwards, with the Anglo-Norman Church, which is historically identical with the existing Church of England, although the more primitive doctrine and discipline of the British period were restored to it by the Reformers.

In the Second Evening Lesson, St. James shows

that a practical faith is the only faith which justifies, and his reproof of pride in public worship as a sin against GOD, inconsistent with justification, should be specially noted. The whole system of selling seats in churches is wrong, and should be reformed as soon as possible: while it lasts, let us beware of the evils which it tends to foster.

In the Epistle, we have an account of the various manifestations of the Spirit, by which GOD was pleased to assure the Church, in the martyr-ages, of His presence and power. In the Gospel, CHRIST weeps over lost sinners, who knew not the time of their visitation, and foretells the overthrow of the Jewish Church and people. He also gives us the perpetual decree, "My house is *the house of prayer*." Those who have "itching ears," and would make it exclusively a place of preaching, should reflect on this; and all should take to heart the amazing privilege which the decree confirms to us. Let us go to church, to "make known our requests unto GOD." The Collect teaches us the law of acceptable prayer. When we ask GOD to give us the things He has expressly promised in Holy Scripture, we may be sure we please Him, and that we shall never ask for such things in vain. He may wait long enough to develop fervour and patience in us: but in the end, He will satisfy our desires, or give us contentment, and even joy, in bearing a trial of faith for His sake "whom having not seen, we love."

Sunday, Eleventh after Trinity.

The First Lesson, this Morning, is a sermon of Moses on the Law, and also a prophecy of the judgments which should fall on the Hebrews in case they should disobey it. When we see, in the subsequent books of the Old Testament, how these awful warnings were fulfilled to the letter in the history of the chosen people, we should learn a lesson with respect to the threats and promises of the New Covenant, under which we are now living. The Second Lesson gives us a specimen of these forewarnings, and is otherwise full of instruction. Observe the place which little children occupy in the affections of Christ, and what is said of their guardian angels. It is further noteworthy that our Lord, who elsewhere bids us *search the Scriptures*, here ordains that we should "hear the Church." It is our duty to do both; and they who neglect to practise and enforce either duty are, so far, unevangelical. The text concerning binding and loosing is worthy of special notice, moreover, as showing that the discipline of the Church is to be dreaded, when it is exercised according to the commandments of God. The shocking abuse of this power by popes and councils, in the Middle Ages, has taught men to despise even the legitimate authority of the Church; but until such texts as these are erased from the Gospel, it must stand

forever true, that he who for sin and scandalous offence is cut off from her communion becomes as a heathen man and a publican to Christians, and unless he repents and is restored, must die under the wrath of GOD. The importance of Christian unity is further enforced by the rule, "Wherever two or three are gathered together, in My name, there am I in the midst of them;" and the promise, to grant what we ask with one accord, is only limited by the scriptural laws of prayer, which forbid us to ask any thing capriciously, and which reserve to GOD, in His superior wisdom, the right to modify His answers to prayer, so as to secure the real prosperity of the petitioner.

The Evening Lesson from Deuteronomy contains that Second rehearsal of the Law which gives name to the book. Moses repeated the Decalogue as an expositor, or preacher, with some verbal variation to enforce it, and to bring out the spirit of it, thus teaching the Israelites not to rest in its letter. Now, this is the further teaching of St. James, who expounds the ethics of the Gospel in the Second Lesson, in such a manner as powerfully to bring out the length and breadth of GOD'S holy Law, as a spiritual law, requiring the careful cleansing of the heart, and a jealous restraint of our thoughts, words, and deeds. Thus, how suggestive is what he says of the tongue! How forcibly the conscience corroborates his fearful delineations! And yet, but for this inspired oracle,

who would have suspected the perils that beset our use of words?

In harmony with these Lessons, we have the Collect, beseeching GOD for grace to "run the way of His commandments." The Epistle shows the connection of faith with morals; a steadfast belief in the Resurrection of the LORD JESUS CHRIST being enforced by the Apostle, as requisite to salvation; while in the Gospel, self-righteousness, or the boasted merit of the Pharisee, is shown to be the reverse of what is acceptable with GOD. What the Pharisee said of his alms and mortifications, was probably no more than the Publican *might* have said, were it not that he had come to the Temple to confess his sins, and not to proclaim his deservings. Besides, the Publican did all these things, not to bring GOD into his debt, but from a real desire to be cleansed from sin, so that he was rather sensible of the sin which was yet unpurified, than of the means he had so imperfectly employed to free himself from it. Observe, too, the Pharisee confessed not his own sins, but the sins of his neighbour; while the Publican, thinking only of his own unworthiness, refrained from comparing himself with any thing but GOD's perfect Law. Beholding in that, as in a burnished mirror, his own deformity, he threw himself upon Mercy, and deprecated the awards of justice. The original Greek implies an appeal for mercy through a propitiation, and teaches us how to escape from the thunders of the Law through the sacrifice of

Calvary. Finally, "the Publican went down to his house justified;" and so may we return from church on every occasion of worship, if only we have there poured out our hearts, as the Publican did, saying, "GOD be merciful to me a sinner." The means of grace are richer, in every way, in a Christian church, than ever they were in the Hebrew Temple; and it is good to make this petition the language of our hearts on entering and leaving the house of GOD. May it be the spirit of our last ejaculations when we come to die!

Sunday, Twelfth after Trinity.

THE Collect is a favourite one, and is extremely felicitous in expression, while its material thought is no less happily conceived. Our conscience is burdened so that we can scarcely look up, and we have no merits whatever to assure us in approaching GOD; but we deal with one who is more ready to hear than we are to pray, and who is wont to give not only more than we deserve, but even more than we desire. And the reason is, that we have a Mediator and Advocate whose merits are infinite, and in whom the FATHER is well pleased: so that, for CHRIST'S sake, we may venture to expect, not only dews of grace, but a drenching shower of mercy upon the thirsty fallow of our souls, and a broad sunshine of love upon our

bodies and temporal estates. We have only to be constant in prayer, and God will not withhold the abundance of His goodness, whether we live or die.

This trust in Christ's sufficiency, and this deep sense of personal insufficiency, are further set before us in the Epistle, where St. Paul applies the principle to the case of the Christian ministry. They, of all men, have the greatest reason to feel it, and to act upon it. Observe how the Apostle interprets the shining of Moses' face. The Hebrew Church was the Body of Moses, as the Christian is the Body of Christ: it was the spirit of the one to detect and judge our sins, and it is the spirit of the other to remit and to justify. How glorious, therefore, the Gospel as compared with the Law, and the Church Catholic as compared with the House of Israel!

In the Gospel we see a beautiful illustration of the Collect: Christ is more ready to give than His petitioner to pray; for while the latter is deaf and dumb, and cannot speak a word, an imploring look secures the abundance of His mercy. Jesus bore the infirmity of the sufferer; for, "looking up to heaven, *He sighed.*" Oh, how much that sigh reveals of the compassions of Jesus! Mysterious world! when He who thus sighs over our woes yet permits them to exist; but that single sigh of Jesus convinces me that He doeth all things well, even when He forbears, for a time, and for His own wise reasons, to make "the deaf

to hear, and the dumb to speak." One reason why our SAVIOUR forbade the people to tell of these things, was that He "sought not His own glory," and was purposely giving us an example, in this respect. He had provided abundantly for His manifestation to Israel at the appointed times, and His plan was to work certain public miracles on fitting occasions. At all other times He withdrew from public homage, and avoided popularity, so that when He stood before Pilate, nobody could lay any thing to His charge, to justify their accusation that He had sought to make Himself a king.

In the Old Testament Lessons, to-day, let us note the holiness of that Law, which Moses commended to Israel by so many considerations, and concerning which he gave them such minute and careful directions. CHRIST delivered us from the curse of the Law, but He re-enacted all its moral requirements, first in His own blessed example, and then in express words. In the Second Morning Lesson, the healing of the blind men is a further illustration of the Collect: He not only healed them; He permitted them to become His followers, and to use their new powers of sight for the most glorious of all purposes—to "see the LORD." In the Second Evening Lesson, St. James, on the other hand, explains one reason why many prayers remain unanswered, in spite of CHRIST'S readiness to hear. And further, this eminently practical Apostle expounds the Law, as developed into a system of Christian ethics. He enforces, not

merely a series of pious acts, but the *formation of holy habits*, which is the essence of true piety. An eminent American layman has very happily enlarged upon this idea in the following words:—

"People talk of acting without thought, and think they have made an excuse. They have only disclosed the sin out of which the sin they are excusing grew. Men should never act without the thought of the Presence of GOD. The so acting betrays the fact that our religion is not continuous,—that it does not pervade our whole soul and regulate all our actions. What is wanting is a deep and abiding reverence for ALMIGHTY GOD. It is that, and that alone, which can regulate all our actions as they ought to be regulated. Such reverence involves a habit. Habits, after all, are the things by which human life is governed. Hence the habit of self-indulgence is the worst of evils, and the habit of self-control the greatest of goods."

Sunday, Thirteenth after Trinity.

In the Old Testament Lessons, we have a retrospect of the Mosaic history, which we have been following for several Sundays, and a sublime exhibition of the grand principle to which the Almighty was introducing the Israelites by all their experiences in the wilderness. They were a nation of degraded and illiterate slaves when GOD, by

His mighty power, delivered them from the yoke of the proudest empire then existing. They were carnal and sensual, and all that discipline was necessary to open their faculties to the perception of the great truth, that "man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD." We infer, that in the discipline of His people, now in this wilderness of the world, GOD is preparing us for the Heavenly Canaan, in a like manner.

In the Second Morning Lesson, our LORD avenges the holiness of the Law, against the wretched casuistry of Pharisees, and other false teachers, and establishes the morals of his Gospel on the firm basis of sincerity and truth. St. James, in the Second Lesson, at Evening Prayer, seems to apply and enforce this sermon of his Master, beginning with an awful warning addressed to those who "oppress the hireling in his wages," or who in any way do unto others as they would not that men should do to them in a reverse of circumstances. He moreover enforces the SAVIOUR'S teaching about swearing "by heaven, or any other oath." Note also the resource of Christians when they are sick. They must not merely send for a physician, as the worldly do, but also for the presbyters of the Church; and the "Visitation of the Sick" is here shown to be an ordinance of the Gospel, for turning the trials of sickness to good account for the soul. In the primitive day, while the "gifts of healing" were still vouchsafed to the

Church, there was an extraordinary ceremony which seems to have been annexed to the exercise of this gift by CHRIST Himself. (See St. Mark, vi. 13.) When this miraculous power ceased, then also the Church ceased to use its outward sign; for to do otherwise would be a perversion of its purpose, and an imposition. But it is still true that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick," and that "if he have committed sins they shall be forgiven," in answer to such prayer. If the LORD forbears to save the sick from death, in answer to prayer, it is for reasons which the dying Christian would himself approve, and in that case the greater blessing of forgiveness is indeed a greater salvation. Note also the duty of being reconciled to those whom we have justly offended. It seems to spring out of our SAVIOUR'S ordinance, touching the Offertory and Holy Communion. (St. Matt. v. 23, 24.) We are to confess our faults one to another, and to use intercessory prayer one for another, as part of that brotherly love which is the fulfilling of the Law. This teaching follows, very appropriately, the intercessory prayer of Moses, in the First Lesson. Finally, how great is the reward which is promised to that Christian who succeeds in converting a single sinner from the errour of his way!

The Epistle demonstrates the unity of the Abrahamic Covenant with the Christian Covenant. "The Law," argues the Apostle, "was given, by way of parenthesis, for a certain end, and it could in no

wise affect the great drift and meaning of that which was instituted long before Moses, and which was meant to supersede him." This was not agreeable to the Jew, but it is the truth which makes the whole plan and Providence of GOD, as regards the Jews, intelligible and self-consistent. "GOD is one" party in the great system of the Jewish Covenant, and it is impossible, whatever the other party may have chosen to understand, that He could have made any contract with them, contrary to the previous and existing contract, which He had made with Abraham, and with all nations in Abraham. The Gospel shows us how to make all men our neighbours. The lawyer did not like to own that a Samaritan could be nearer to a Jew, than a priest and a Levite, of his own people; but he was forced to own as much, by circumlocution. In like manner CHRIST commands us to make all men our brethren. And observe that although, when CHRIST was preaching to a Samaritan, (St. John iv. 22,) he asserted the just claim of the Hebrews to be the true Church, He now tells the Hebrews not only that a good Samaritan is better than a bad Hebrew, but that even a true Priest and Levite, of His own ordination, may be rebuked by the piety and zeal of a Samaritan layman! Infer that a good dissenter is better than a lukewarm Churchman. A man may be a true priest, or a true deacon, by ordination, and yet fail of the reward which, because of his neglect and indifference, others shall have the opportunity to

ensure. With less of privilege and knowledge, they do more for CHRIST, and if they are not guilty of *intentional* disrespect to divine institutions, no doubt they shall receive the Master's approval in the end. Now, the Collect, which speaks of "true and laudable service," connects with this Gospel, and beseeches GOD that we, who are His people, and who stand in the place of the ancient Hebrews as to Orthodoxy and Divine authority, may not fail to be like the Samaritan also, in his example of CHRIST-like benevolence and love. Bishop Heber has a sermon on this parable, treating it partly as an allegory, which it may be well to read.

Sunday, Fourteenth after Trinity.

IN the Morning, the First Lesson is that gorgeous lyric in which Moses, like the dying Jacob, blesses the tribes, and speaks of things to come. As it frequently coincides with the Autumnal Ember-Week, or falls near it, we should note particularly the blessing of Levi as prophetical of the Gospel ministry, who are called to teach the new Law and put incense before the LORD. The duty of Christian pastors to leave father, and mother, and wife, and children, to preach the Gospel, is one of the signs by which we know that the blessing of Levi is transferred, with the self-denial of Levi,

to the Apostolic Ministry. The parable of the talents, which occurs in the Second Lesson, bears also upon the commission of the Christian priest, very forcibly, but is equally applicable to every servant of GOD, in his vocation and ministry. The point of our LORD's answer to the wicked servant must not be overlooked. The servant had accused Him of seeking to reap where He had planted no seed: the LORD answers, "If so, you cannot blame me when I only ask the fruit of what I did plant: you admit that I gave you the talent, and hence I have a right to expect it back again, with its natural increase." The sublimity of the whole Lesson, and its vast importance as a foretaste of judgment, cannot be too strongly described. How remarkable it is, with respect to merit, that the wicked are represented as insisting on their innocence! while the righteous cannot remember what they ever did to deserve the vast rewards which the SAVIOUR brings with Him. At Evening Prayer the history of Moses concludes. The Law cannot take the people of GOD into the land of Promise. Joshua (the type and namesake of JESUS) represents the Gospel, and is raised up to do what Moses could not. If this happens to be Ember-week—note the Ordination of Joshua: he "was full of the Spirit of Wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him." In the Second Lesson we begin to read St. Peter's First Catholic Epistle—every word of which seems steeped in the tears he shed when he "wept bitterly." Observe, how he

speaks of CHRIST—as it were breaking a costly box upon His head, in every word! It must be remarked, also, that we have here a key to the right understanding of the Old Testament. The prophets spake by the HOLY GHOST, and were obliged to study their own Scriptures, afterwards, to know their full meaning! But this Spirit of prophecy is called the Spirit of CHRIST which was in them; and the grand purport of their writings was to "testify beforehand the sufferings of CHRIST, and the glory that should follow." So St. John affirms, "the testimony of JESUS is the Spirit of prophecy." In a word, the true Christian sees CHRIST everywhere, in the Old Testament, as well as in the New.

To obtain GOD's promises we must love His precepts: and faith and hope are essential to this love of duty or practical obedience. Such is the spirit of the Collect. But the Epistle shows us that GOD's commandments are at war with our natural appetites and passions, so that nothing but grace can make us believe and hope in such wise as to obey. Last Sunday we had an instance of true charity, in a good Samaritan; to-day, we have another of this despised class, setting an example of true faith, and rebuking the conduct of nine members of the true Church, who had not even common gratitude! Yet CHRIST maintains the authority of the Church in bidding them "go and show themselves unto the priests," as Moses had commanded. This they should have done, but

they should not have left the other undone. Note, that as "they went they were cleansed." In obeying, they found healing. It need scarcely be said that leprosy is a type of sin. If the sinner, instead of waiting till he feels better, would begin at once to obey God, and to observe His ordinances, the conversion and grace which he needs would be wrought in him simultaneously.

Sunday, Fifteenth after Trinity.

It has been before noted, that the autumnal Ember Sunday may fall elsewhere, owing to the movements of the Paschal Feast. But this Sunday appears to be designed, in part, as its representative, and as it is very often the Sunday before or after the Ember fasts, it may be properly regarded in that light.

Hence, the Collect is a prayer for the Church: it recognises man's frailty, and God's sufficiency. The Epistle contains the text, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross:" and the Gospel teaches us not only the care of God for his servants, but, also, that "no man can serve two masters." While every part of the Service is full of apt teaching and comfort for all the faithful, in common, it is also to be observed that it contains special words for the pastors of the flock.

The First Morning Lesson brings us to the

closing scene of Joshua's ministry, as we have lately observed that of his predecessor Moses. It is primarily a charge to "the *presbyters* of Israel," but also is full of instruction to the people. In the Second Lesson, the greater JOSHUA instructs His ministers how to sow the seed of His word, and the people how to receive it. In it, also, the Church is exhibited under the similitude of the Apostolic ship, in which His presence, alone, insures peace and successful navigation.

At Evening Prayer, the dying charge of Joshua is continued, and, like Moses, he reviews the great points in the history of Israel, to illustrate the fidelity of GOD with respect to His threats and promises. The text, "Choose you, this day, whom ye will serve," connects with the Gospel for the day, "No man can serve two masters." It is to be specially noted that the discipline through which GOD made Israel to pass, in the wilderness, produced its effect. That servile and sensual race of half-Egyptians fell in the wilderness; but their children, who had been nurtured under Moses and Joshua, served the LORD, and hence founded the new nation with every advantage to be derived from a holy and happy beginning. In the Second Lesson, the Christian Church, like Israel of old, is called "a royal priesthood;" and it is to be remarked that St. Peter understands CHRIST to be the Rock of the Church, and all Christians, like himself "lively stones," upon that foundation. CHRIST also is the great Bishop and Shepherd of

souls, whose Supreme Pontificate is the only Universal bishopric of which St. Peter seems to have known. When any one who imagines himself the peculiar successor of St. Peter exhibits the same love for CHRIST, and for men, which this Apostle did, and a like hatred of making himself a "lord over GOD'S heritage," and a like fidelity in teaching nothing more nor less than the Scriptures teach, it will be time enough to examine his other claims to such a character. But, in any event, no such person could ask us to give him more than belonged to St. Peter himself. Now, St. Peter submitted to be blamed where he was in the wrong, (Gal. ii. 11,) and refused extravagant homage, (Acts x. 26,) and sat, in the Church at Jerusalem, at the feet of St. James, and subscribed to the common decree which was enacted by "the Apostles, Presbyters, and brethren." Nearly all the woes and divisions of Christendom have grown out of the violation of these principles by those who assert a fabulous claim to St. Peter's dignity and apostleship.

Ember Week after Trinity.

THE Ember-week of autumn comes in like "the latter rain" upon the fields, after harvest-home. Again it gives token of a harvest, though it seems to say, in the words of St. James, "Behold, the

husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain." It falls in the month of September, marked in our American Calendar by the anniversaries of the deaths of five of our Bishops, and so moves, like a planet, in the midst of a constellation made up of brilliant names, (those of Hobart, and Chase, and Wainwright,) while that of St. Matthew—the Apostle who left all and followed CHRIST—is the great star of the shining group, and the sign of this holy season. It is sweet to think of the holy dead, as we pray for the pastors of CHRIST'S flock, who have entered into their labours, and who must soon follow them to their rest. "The fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever?" But the Church lives still the coal on her altars shall never be quenched; and constant prayer is the sign and token of her perpetuity. Let us, therefore, never cease to pray

> "that servants may abound
> Of those pure altars worthy; ministers
> Detach'd from pleasure; to the love of gain
> Superior; insusceptible of pride,
> And by ambition's longings undisturb'd;
> Men whose delight is where their duty leads
> Or fixes them; whose least distinguished day
> Shines with some portion of that heavenly lustre
> Which makes the Sabbath lovely."

After the heats of the summer, this week is a good time for stirring up one's heart for the work

of the LORD during the autumn. The leaves begin to be sere; the days grow shorter; the stormy equinox is hard at hand; but the fields are ever green in which the Good Shepherd leads the soul; and prayer and fasting are as the still waters in which heaven is reflected, and where the soul may bathe and be refreshed with the peace of GOD.

Now, in schools and colleges, the youth of the land are coming together, after long vacation, to go on with studies which they are very little prepared, in general, to turn to account for the glory of GOD. Now let us pray for much rain on their young souls: that every college may be as Gideon's fleece, drenched with the dews of GOD's grace; and that the choicest youth of the land may be called of GOD, as was Samuel, and led to answer as he did, "Speak, LORD, for Thy servant heareth."

So may the ignoble spirit of covetousness and low ambition, which blights the young minds of America, and makes so many of them prematurely old in vice, give way to the glorious spirit of the Gospel; the spirit of winning souls—which is the spirit of true wisdom; the spirit of missionary enterprise; the spirit of Christian heroes and martyrs. Oh for such sons of the Church as were Martyn and Heber, of late years, and such as were St. Paul and St. Athanasius, of old! And let us not forget to pray for "holy women" also, such as bestowed much labour on St. Paul, and

were his helpers in the Gospel. Let us pray for patient *deaconesses*, to labour for CHRIST among the poor, and the diseased, and the young, and the vicious; and not less for mothers in Israel, like Hannah, and like Eunice, to rear their children "in the nurture and admonition of the LORD;" or, like Monica, to give the LORD no rest, in prayers and struggles, till their wayward sons are brought back from the paths of sin, by the grace of GOD, to shine as lights in the world, and after that—"as the stars, for ever and ever."

Sunday, Sixteenth after Trinity.

TO-DAY, the Old Testament lessons contain the story of the discomfiture of Jabin and Sisera, chiefly by the hands of the maiden Jael and the prophetess Deborah. It seems to have been the will of GOD, as the time of redemption drew on, that women should be made the instruments of greater and greater blessings to His people. These noble women were soon succeeded by Hannah and Ruth; and a bright succession followed, until Anna and Elizabeth appear on the scene, and then the Blessed Virgin, in whom GOD fulfils the great prophecy concerning the Seed of the Woman. The reproach of womanhood was taken away in her, as it had come with Eve; and from that time, woman has been elevated to a new dig-

nity, and an enlarged sphere of action and of privilege under the Gospel.

But we must not apply to ancient examples of female piety the high views of woman's sphere and duties, which have been the product of the Gospel only. It can never be the duty of a Christian maiden to smite even an enemy, or an oppressor, in his slumber. Woman is now called on to minister in a far different way, even at the bedside of the wicked and of the foes of our Holy Faith. Let us, for a moment, look at the case of Jael.

It may be doubted whether a Hebrew maid would have been equally justified in doing as did Jael. Inspired wisdom has not pronounced in the case of Judith. But Jael was not a Hebrew, but only an ally of the Hebrews; a daughter of the roving Rechabites; far less imbued with the knowledge of GOD than the most ignorant Israelites; far less instructed in His Holy Law. In these circumstances, GOD accepted her faith in the performance of a duty, and forgave her ignorance in the way she took to do it. It was her duty, as an ally of Israel, to aid the Hebrews in an undertaking which GOD had commanded. This she knew: and it is instructive as to the state of the heathen generally, that, in her case, as in the case of Rahab, GOD accepted what proceeded from real faith, and pardoned what was the result of birth and education. Thus, when Deborah eulogizes her as "blessed above women," she pauses,

and qualifies her words by a significant addition, "Yea, blessed shall she be above *women in the tent*," that is, Arabian women. She is blessed above all of her nomadic tribe, for that is wholly noble and heroic in such an one, which, in a daughter of Jacob, might not have deserved unmixed praise. Had the savage, Pocahontas, delivered our Colonial forefathers from cruel sufferings by a similar stratagem, we must admit that she would have deserved a similar homage; yet we should pause before awarding as much to one of the many English ladies of those days, who came to live in Virginia, had she wrought deliverance in this way.

The sublimity of Deborah's ode must inflame the meanest imagination, especially when it is read in Divine Service, with mingled simplicity and feeling. The proper manner of an Anglican priest, in reading the Lessons, is one equally removed from artificial effect, and from languid or monotonous formality.

The Second Morning Lesson contains warnings against a life unprepared for Judgment. The imagery derives impressiveness from the consideration that all has been fulfilled, on a limited scale, in the Judgment of the Jewish people under Titus; and that this fact is a pledge of what yet remains to be accomplished, on a grander scale, "when the SON of MAN shall come in His glory." In the Second Evening Lesson we have a chapter of St. Peter's ethical teaching, with

his exposition of baptism, and of the Descent into hell.

The Collect is a touching act of Intercession for the Church Militant, which is coupled in the Epistle with St. Paul's more full and fervent genuflection in the same behalf. Observe that this solemn devotion of St. Paul seems to have been his habitual prayer; and that "the whole family in heaven and earth," that is, of angels and living saints, is recognised by him as one Church. Observe, also, how much is implied in his desire that all Christians "*may be able to comprehend* . . . the fulness of GOD." Alas! how little of the riches of what we believe endows the souls of most of us! How contentedly we impoverish ourselves, by neither "hearing the Church" nor "searching the Scriptures"!

The Gospel is a favourite narrative from St. Luke, that of "the only son of his mother," who was a widow of Nain. It connects with the Epistle, as enabling us to know, in some degree, "the love of CHRIST, which passeth knowledge."

Sunday, Seventeenth after Trinity.

THE hypocrisy and pride of the Pharisees are rebuked in this day's Gospel, as a warning to us; and the general law is repeated, which we heard on the eleventh Sunday, in connection with the

prayer of the publican, "that whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased." So in the Epistle, lowliness and meekness are insisted upon; and it is more than intimated that the Church's unity depends on this law of humility and forbearance in all its members. A divided Christendom bears witness, in our degenerate day, to the havoc which the contrary spirit has made among those who ought to be one. In the short and pithy Collect, our need of preventing grace (that is, grace which anticipates and presanctifies our thoughts, words, and deeds) is confessed before GOD; and we pray for more grace to secure the former grace, lest our humility should be changed into pride by our earliest growth in godliness. This is a prayer, therefore, for the earlier and the latter rain; and it is well suited to the natural suggestions of the Autumnal Season, when, in our latitudes, the latter rain is often so greatly necessary.

In the First Morning Lesson we find Samuel's exhortation to Israel, marking a great stage in the history of the ancient people. The devout Christian will remember Jacob's valediction on the Fifth Sunday, that of Moses on the Fourteenth, and that of Joshua on the Fifteenth. To-day the series is continued in that of Samuel; and so we go on, from Sunday to Sunday, to review the teachings, at various epochs of similar importance of the great and holy men whom GOD raised up successively to do His work among His

chosen. In the Second Lesson we have a reference to the cruelty of Pilate towards certain Galileans, which is supposed, with reason, to have occasioned that enmity between Pilate and Herod, (the tetrarch of Galilee,) which was only made up when they united in crucifying the LORD of Glory.

In the First Evening Lesson we have the story of the beginning of King David's career, his contest with the giant. Observe, that the inquiry at the close of the chapter is not concerning David himself, for Saul knew him well; but his surprising heroism made the king anxious to know something of his father and his family—as we always take an interest in the antecedents of one who has distinguished himself. The whole of this story has instructive spiritual bearings; and, although a true history, it may be studied as a parable. Thus, in the Second Lesson, the words, "arm yourselves with the same mind," may serve to illustrate David's unwillingness to confide in Saul's armour. St. Peter's further exhortation to godly living and patient suffering, furnish a sublime outline of the Christian character, amid the trials and combats of the world. The affection with which the Church commemorates the primitive martyrs, is also justified by the Apostle, when he says, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the *spirit of glory and of God* resteth upon you." This is the bright *nimbus*, or halo, which the Church discerns

encircling the heads of those great heroes whose faith encountered, in her behalf, the giant heathenism of Cæsar's empire, and defeated it in the name of JESUS.

Sunday, Eighteenth after Trinity.

THE spirit of this Sunday's service is to exhibit the peril of temptation and the mercy and judgments of GOD towards sinners. We therefore pray, in the Collect, for purity of heart and mind, and for grace to withstand the great enemies whom we renounced in baptism. In the Epistle, we are directed to Him who alone can confirm this grace in us and give us this blameless purity against the day of account. In the Gospel, we see our LORD subjected to the temptations of men, and re-enacting the whole Law, in its spiritual breadth, as the standard of Evangelical morality. It is usual to omit, after the Decalogue, on this Sunday, the words, "Hear also what our LORD JESUS CHRIST saith," etc., for the obvious reason that we have the same here, in its original place. In the same Gospel, He intimates that He is the LORD, as well as the Son of David: thus asserting His right to enact a Law, and to judge all men by it, without respect of persons.

With such a Service for the Altar, the Church has thought good to connect the awful history of

David's fall from purity, through the temptations of the flesh and the devil, as the First Lesson at Morning Prayer. Last Sunday we saw David strong in his holiness—to-day we see him weakened by guilt. But this Lesson can only be understood when taken in connection with the 51st Psalm, and with the history of the judgments, which followed David to the grave, in fulfilment of the prophecy, "now therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house." David was forgiven, but only on the most bitter repentance, and with the discipline of successive chastisements, which brought down his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

The custom of humbling a subjugated people by a ceremonial procession under the instruments of servile labour and through the brick-kilns, reversed the former humiliations of the Israelites under Pharaoh, but seems to be here introduced as a preface to the chapters that follow. David, in this triumph, fulfilled his duty to the kingdom over which he reigned, for it was commanded by God to subdue the Ammonites. But he was not permitted to derive any personal comfort from this culminating triumph of his life; he returned to Jerusalem, to pass under saws, and harrows, and axes, himself, and to walk through the brick-kilns, as it were, when he fled from Absalom, his son, and had stones and potsherds cast upon his head, by the insulting Shimei. Thus God dealt with him, as with the Ammonites—teaching us

the impartial judgments of GOD. We learn from this Lesson never to presume and never to despair

> "The gray-haired saint may fail, at last,
> The surest guide a wanderer prove;
> Death only binds us fast
> To the bright shore of love."

The Second Lesson displays GOD's mercy to sinners, and the principle on which a repenting transgressor gives joy in heaven to the angels. If any one was disposed to murmur at the First Lesson, and to say of CHRIST, "this man receiveth sinners," he is most touchingly rebuked by the Second Lesson, and more especially, by the story of the prodigal.

In the Evening Prayer, the First Lesson begins with the grief of David, for Absalom, and continues with the story of his restoration to his throne, after a terrible humiliation. In the Second Lesson, we have a text which seems the motto for the entire services of this day—"Be sober; be vigilant; because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

It need hardly be said, that the 51st Psalm is a most appropriate Introit for this day's Service. Or a portion of it may be used as an Anthem.

Sunday, Nineteenth after Trinity.

The First Lessons, this Morning and Evening, mark another step in the progress of the chosen people. The Temple of God, in Jerusalem, built by Solomon "the Peaceful," is consecrated as a house of prayer for all people, and a great advance is made towards the illumination of the Gentile world. In the prayer of consecration, note the provision made for the case of Israel's captivity in Babylon; a provision which seems to have comforted Daniel. Much of the imagery of the Psalms and of the prophets is taken from the hill of the Lord, which was now crowned with this stupendous work; a "figure of the true," and an emblem also of the Church of God, whose "foundations are upon the holy hills"—of God's covenant and promises.

In the Second Morning Lesson, our Lord Himself is seen teaching in the Temple, and speaks of Himself as the head corner-stone of that Spiritual Temple which is "the blessed company of all faithful people." In the Second Evening Lesson, note especially the nature of the Christian calling and election—how clearly it is an election to the means of grace, which the believer is to "make sure" by obedience. St. Peter says, "*If ye do these things*, ye shall never fall," by which we see that the elect may fall, although strong terms are used elsewhere in Scripture, implying that there are

some who have, unknown to themselves, made sure their election before death.

What is said elsewhere of the latter half of the Christian year is beautifully illustrated in the Altar Service for this day. We have seen that the Creed, and the Incarnate Word, are the prominent matter in the services of the first moiety—that is, till Trinity Sunday; after that, the Decalogue and the Holy Spirit have predominant place. In the Collect, therefore, this day, we pray for the HOLY SPIRIT, as the director of our consciences, in all duty, acknowledging our natural inability to please GOD. The Epistle enlarges on the holiness of Christian morals, and warns us against grieving the HOLY GHOST, who, as the finger of GOD, alone is able to "write these laws in our hearts." In the Gospel, we learn that this, our natural inability, is a spiritual disease, like the palsy, by which we are rendered powerless to perform what we know to be right. This disease CHRIST can cure, forgiving our sins, and giving us the grace of the Holy Spirit, so that we can please Him both in will and deed.

This Gospel illustrates the doctrine of "baptism for the remission of sins." The sick of the palsy found sponsors to do for him what he could not do for himself; "and JESUS, *seeing their faith*, said unto him, Thy sins be forgiven thee." When the sick man heard this, he had only to appropriate it, *by his own faith*, and the effect was complete. So it is in the case of baptized children. We are not

to suppose the sick man's sins were forgiven him without his own faith; but the faith of others had influence with CHRIST, in moving him to this free proffer of his salvation. We ought to bring our friends to JESUS, in every way; in prayer, and effort, and by becoming sponsors to children and catechumens. The power of CHRIST to forgive sins, as the SON of Man, was thus demonstrated to be a part of His Eternal Priesthood. How He still exercises this power may be seen by recurring to the Gospel for Low Sunday.

Sunday, Twentieth after Trinity.

THE rich Lessons from the Old Testament, to day, contain the narrative of noble works, which the LORD wrought, in the old time, by His servant Elijah. From the time of the appearance of the Tishbite, until the close of the ministry of John the Baptist, a period of wellnigh a thousand years, we must regard all things as signs and harbingers of the first Advent—the coming of the great Sun of Righteousness. Elijah's voice in the wilderness was as the first cock-crowing, in the deep of night; while John Baptist's was as the last, at break of day. A lively interest is stimulated by the very opening of this history, which introduces Elijah with a wild abruptness. The scene on Mount Carmel is one of the sublimest of the

Scripture histories, and should be read with feeling, and heard with earnest meditation, as the history of a great reformation in the ancient Israel. How wonderfully, from age to age, God prepares His chosen witnesses, and brings them, at the fitting time, to their appointed place!

In the Second Morning Lesson, John Baptist is introduced as "the friend of the Bridegroom," bearing witness to the Messiah, while the Messiah himself is seen as the great central figure on whom the two Elijahs are thus made to wait. The Second Evening Lesson follows appropriately the history of the priests of Baal, for it begins with the words, "but there were false prophets, also, among the people." In the Christian Church, God does not propose to visit false teachers with temporal pains and penalties; but He shows His people how to escape their snares, and also reveals His abhorrence of their practices. The "privy introduction of damnable heresies," here spoken of, has been remarkably exemplified in the history of modern Socinianism. Whole congregations in New England, and in Europe, which once professed the "knowledge of the LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST," have been privily seduced from their faith, by popular preachers, who, being subject to no Apostolic discipline, and having no Liturgical safeguards, have first declined from "the way of righteousness" themselves, and then, little by little, have succeeded in drawing their flocks to "deny the LORD that bought them." Blessed be

God for the marked contrast which the Church has always presented in this respect! Its teachers have sometimes fallen, but they have seldom been able to "draw away disciples after them," for its divine organization is such as to provide against this very danger, and to protect the flock from wolves in sheep's clothing.

The Collect for the day is a prayer of faith, embodying the concurrence of man's free will, with the love of God for His elect, and asking for temporal and spiritual blessings as a means of serving Him the better in one's vocation and ministry. The duty of circumspection, in the Christian life and warfare, is part of the teaching of the Epistle; and a reason for it is shown us in the Gospel: —"Many are called, but few chosen."

It is one thing, then, to be called, or evangelized; another, to be elected, or baptized; still another, to be finally chosen, as a perpetual guest at the heavenly banquet. Many were called who refused to come at all; of those who finally came, one, at least, showed the king such great disrespect, that he refused to put on the wedding-raiment, which was usually provided at the gate of an Eastern palace, with water and ointments, to fit the company for the presence of the Sovereign. So, those who come to the supper of our Lord, refusing to put on the righteousness of Christ, will, at the last, be driven out from the eternal feast, upon which they have thrust themselves unworthily. True, they were invited, even

benevolently *compelled* to come in; but there was no reason why they should thus neglect the only qualification exacted of them, for the everlasting enjoyment of their privilege, seeing that also was freely proffered. Their contempt for the worthiness of CHRIST, and the robe of His righteousness, or justifying grace, was the final proof of their character, as hardened against the fear and love of GOD.

Sunday, Twenty-First after Trinity.

PARDON and peace, and cleansing from sin, and a quiet mind—all these are the burthen of the Collect. The Epistle shows where disquiet and unrest, and the bonds and filthiness of sin, come from—even from the devil. The Gospel teaches us importunity in prayers, and the power of the SAVIOUR to work His mercies, in immediate answer to prayer, as well when afar off as when near at hand.

Observe in the Epistle how the shield of faith covers the whole body; it is "above all,"—that is, worn over the entire armour and the entire man. See, too, how eloquent is St. Paul's expression—"an ambassador in bonds!" An ambassador is a sacred person, among the most savage nations, but an ambassador from the Court of Heaven is in chains, under Cæsar's government. In the

Gospel, the nobleman's faith is the more praiseworthy, because not many "signs and wonders" had yet been wrought by CHRIST; this was only His second miracle.

As the Collect prays for cleansing, so the First Lesson in the morning is the story of Naaman's cleansing from his leprosy. Leprosy was a type of sin. It was incurable except by GOD Himself, and, in the instance of Naaman, baptism was foreshadowed; but baptism itself is but a symbol of the blood of JESUS, which alone cleanseth from all sin. The world's remedies for sin are Abana and Pharpar: but the little Jordan of CHRIST's merits, is the test of that humility and repentance which are prerequisites of healing. In the Second Lesson, the same fountain is exhibited by CHRIST Himself, as quenching the sinner's thirst—"Come unto me and drink."

In the Evening, we have the story of the destruction of Sennacherib's army; a sublime narrative, and full of instruction. The Church is "the virgin, the daughter of Jerusalem," who shakes her head at the threats of the world, and defies the gates of hell. Her Maker is her husband; let her preserve her virgin purity, and fear no evil. The Lesson from St. Peter is repeated from Ash-Wednesday, and is filled with threats which should terrify the wicked, and with promises which insure to the believer abundance of peace, amid the afflictions of the world, and in anticipating its final doom.

Sunday, Twenty-Second after Trinity.

THE constancy and faith of Daniel, "the Man of Loves," are the subject of the First Lessons, to-day; while the Second Lessons are from St. John, "the disciple whom JESUS loved," the Daniel of the New Testament.

The history of Daniel's life in Babylon is one of strange vicissitude. He was a captive, and a eunuch, an exile from the Land of Promise, and his beloved Jerusalem was in ruins. In the 137th Psalm, which should be the Introit, to-day, we have the portrait of his heart, as he sat down and wept by the waters of Babylon. But those who make the sorrows of the Church their own, and who so identify themselves with truth in the world that its wounds are theirs, may bear the lot of temporal prosperity. And Daniel, with all his great trials of faith, was the most prosperous of all the prophets. He became the premier of an empire; he directed all the affairs of a great state; and yet he walked with GOD. He was in the world, but not of it. Three times a day (and no doubt four times in the night) he retired from worldly thoughts, and kneeled in his chamber and gave thanks, even when a den of lions yawned for him; and observe how much is implied in the words—"his windows being open, *towards Jerusalem*." That much at least he could

enjoy of Church-privileges; so much he could have of the temple; for, as we learned on the *Nineteenth Sunday*, it had been consecrated with a special Collect for such a case, (I. Kings viii. 48;) and so "he thought upon her stones, and it pitied him to see her in the dust." In all this we learn the duty of a Christian, in the present state of the Catholic Church. Let his prayer go up to GOD, looking towards "Jerusalem which is above, which is the Mother of us all."

The First Lesson in the Evening is part of the Apocalypse of the Old Testament, which Daniel saw in Babylon, as St. John did, afterward, in Patmos. He that sat was the LORD JESUS—the "Ancient of Days."

The "contradiction of sinners against Himself" which was borne by our blessed LORD, is set forth in the Second Morning Lesson, after that marvellous record of His mercy to a guilty woman, which teaches that none need despair. CHRIST "came not into the world to condemn the world:" He could pity one whom her fellow-sinners despised, though they were just as bad. Mercy and forgiveness were the spirit of His First Advent—even to the chief of sinners. But His Second Advent will be of a different kind; and His rebuke of the accusers shows that He is the searcher of hearts. So the delays of divine justice only teach us to expect that it will burn like fire, when it is revealed. In the Evening, St. John teaches us therefore to confess our sins

betimes, and that "the blood of JESUS CHRIST cleanseth from all sin."

The Gospel connects with the story of the woman. Her accusers could expect forgiveness for themselves, while grasping her by the throat, and not only thirsting for her blood, but for that of JESUS also. CHRIST teaches us to hope for forgiveness "until seventy times seven," for all our offences, but only on condition of our forgiving those who trespass against us.

In the Epistle we have St. Paul's prayer for his dear Philippians, and an example of love and devotion to their good, which the Collect teaches us to employ for the Church in general, as one Household of Faith.

Sunday, Twenty-Third after Trinity.

THE Epistle, which is again from that of St. Paul to the Philippians, is marked by the special tenderness with which the Apostle uniformly saluted that Church, which was the first-born of his mission in Europe, the fruit of his scourgings, of his imprisonment in the stocks, of his midnight songs and prayers, and of the jailer's question, "What must I do to be saved?" How he magnifies the Cross! As the Philippians made much of their Roman citizenship, (even St. Paul had asserted his own in their city, which was a

colony,) so he now teaches them of a better citizenship, saying, "our *conversation* (citizenship) is in heaven,"—the original word being that which implies the freedom of an empire. Now, take the idea of the Gospel, and as we "render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's," so, by virtue of our relations to His kingdom, let us be sure to render "to GOD the things which are GOD's." The Roman coin bore Cæsar's image, but our souls and bodies bear the image and superscription of our Maker and our Redeemer. While we draw this meaning from our SAVIOUR's words, let us not fail to admire His wisdom, in thus rebuking those who sought to entangle Him in His talk, and to involve Him in a breach of His subjection to the temporal power. In the Collect, the Church presents her corporate prayer for the prayers of all the faithful in general, that GOD may be their refuge and strength, and that, asking in faith, they may be answered in love.

To-day we begin to read the Proverbs—the Young Man's Own Book, able to make him wise unto salvation. By taking heed unto his way, according unto this word, he may also cleanse his way. Every precept and "dark saying" of this book is a priceless jewel to him who will attain to the understanding of it. The book is the Decalogue in its application to all the circumstances of life; and it is a guide to temporal prosperity, as well as to life eternal.

The history of the man that was born blind, is

an interesting exhibition of the divine love, bringing good out of evil; and in the fact that the sufferer was sent to Siloam, instead of being healed by a word, we have an illustration of the same law, by which Naaman was sent to wash in Jordan. "The foolishness of GOD is wiser than men." He has been pleased to ordain means of grace: the use of them is a proof of humility, faith, and obedience. Hence, the LORD honours His own appointments, and requires the use of the means, where they may be had. The blind man had to grope his way to Siloam, but he returned more easily. So the trembling sinner should go forward to the Sacraments, and use them to lay hold on CHRIST. Enough that he is "sent"—and that Siloam is *sent* forth for him. In that pool, which issued from the Temple, we have a type of the HOLY GHOST, *sent* forth into the hearts of all who seek Him, in the means of grace. In the Second Evening Lesson, we have the messages of the Spirit to each class in the several stages of Christian life—childhood, youth, and age. To childhood their baptismal purity is suggested—"your sins are forgiven you." To youth, the duty of contest—"because ye are strong." To age, the benefits of Christian experience—"ye have known Him that is from the beginning," that is, the "Ancient of Days."

The Proper Introit for this Sunday is the 100th Psalm, adapted to the Gospel; but, as we have it after the Second Lesson, daily, a fitting substitute may be found in the 96th Psalm.

Sunday, Twenty-Fourth after Trinity

In the Lessons from the Proverbs, let us note, to-day, that WISDOM is gradually unveiled to us, not as an abstraction, but as a Person, the Word of GOD. In the Morning, this fact is very nearly brought out—for by Wisdom, as by the Word, GOD is said to have created all things; but in the Evening Lesson—all is disclosed. He who is speaking is CHRIST, the Wisdom of GOD; for He says, "He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul." In the Second Morning Lesson, we hear the same Wisdom saying, "My sheep hear my voice—and I give unto them Eternal Life." In the Second Evening Lesson, the Evangelist who supplied the Morning Lesson enforces it, pleading the cause of the Good Shepherd who "was manifested to take away our sins."

In the Epistle, "Wisdom" is again made prominent in the prayer of St. Paul for the Colossians; but it may be observed that he here enumerates it, as one of the seven spiritual gifts, each one of which, in paraphrase, he appears to specify. The Gospel is the raising of Jairus' daughter, and, in parenthesis, the healing of the woman with the issue. Both are symbols of loosing from those bonds of sin and frailty, which are spoken of in the Collect; but each miracle demands a word of special comment.

The raising of this damsel affords an example of one of the four stages of death, over which our LORD displayed his power. (1.) The daughter of Jairus had just expired; her soul had not yet entered Hades; she slept in death, but was not yet fast bound in it. It is questionable whether it was more than a trance; a trance which would not have been broken, deepening to complete dissolution, but still a trance, rather than the extinction of vitality. JESUS called it *sleep;* and though "they laughed him to scorn," we may see in this a proof of His purity and guilelessness. He did not magnify the miracle, but pronounced the hopelessness of the case less absolute than it seemed to be. (2.) The son of the widow of Nain was truly dead and cold, and borne out to burial. (3.) Lazarus' body was putrid in the grave. (4.) The Saints that slept (St. Matt. xxvii. 52) were in the very dust of death. Yet over all these JESUS had the same power of release.

The woman with the issue had faith, but it was weak and trembling. She overcame her fears, by faith, and laid hold on JESUS, and there went virtue out of Him and healed her. So, by faith, we may approach CHRIST, in the LORD's Supper. It is well to have fears, if only faith is stronger, and seizes the means of cure. The Sacraments are as the hem of JESUS' garment: they present something by which He may be reached and appropriated. Whosoever will may come, and be loosed from the bonds of sin, and absolved from offences.

The Introit, which is the 101st Psalm, teaches us to magnify mercy, while we forget not the terrours of judgment.

Sunday, next before Advent.

We have come to the end of the great circle, and the Christian Year is complete. There may indeed be twenty-seven Sundays after Trinity, and these are partially provided for, by special Lessons: but, if there be so many, it is because several Epiphany Sundays were dropped to meet an early Lent, and we fall back upon the Collects and Altar-Services of such Sundays, as the supplement of these.

The Lessons for the surplus Sundays need not be commented upon, but may suffice to try the reader's own powers, whether he has learned to seize in each at least one striking and prominent text, in harmony with the other services. But here it may properly be asked, at the close of our review of a whole year,—where is the soul which has followed its inexhaustible variety, that can listen to the objection, sometimes thrown out against the Church Service, that *it is only going over the same things on all occasions*.

But now we come to the Sunday next before Advent improperly called the Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity, since its Altar-Service must often

be postponed from that Sunday, and is always used on the last Sunday in the Christian Year. It is called by old-fashioned people "Stir-up Sunday," (from the first words of the Collect,) for so they avoid the difficulty of naming it numerically.

The Lessons for the Twenty-Fifth Sunday are always to be used on that day. They are again from the Proverbs, and from St. John. The raising of Lazarus follows happily the story of Jairus' daughter, in the last Sunday's Gospel; and the Evening Lesson, from the Beloved Disciple, seems singularly fitted for the close of the year, warning us against the Antichrist who is coming in the latter days, and "the many Antichrists" that must precede him. "Even now already is it in the world."

For the Introit the 122d Psalm is fitting; because it may be regarded as a *finale*, or as an *overture*, to the Christian Year. The Collect is a note of animation and awakening. One year is gone through; we are the more ready for another, and we pray for a *stirring-up* to new efforts for fresh blessings. An appropriate Anthem may be made of the words, "They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles', they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint." The Gospel, for the third time in the year, gives us an account of our LORD's miraculous power to feed the souls and bodies of those who hunger and thirst after Righteousness Appropriately enough to the last

Sunday, it thus seems to observe the precept which it contains, to gather up the fragments and to let nothing be lost. As the Epistle promises JESUS, as THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, and "the Righteous Branch," so the Gospel shows how He imparts His righteousness to all who come unto Him by faith. They must feed on Him, that is, on His Death and Sacrifice, and draw life from His Atonement. The Epistle is a prophecy of the coming prophet and king; the Gospel exhibits Him as the Priest, and claims for Him the predictions of the Epistle, as "that Prophet that should come into the world." In the Epistle He is foreshown as the Son of David; in the Gospel, we see that as He was born in Bethlehem, "the house of Bread," so He is the Bread of Life to the world.

This Service is thus redolent (like an early spring of summer) of the coming Advent Season and Christmas-tide. The Services of the entire year are like the Grand Oratorio of the "Messiah." The mere stranger, who comes for a single Service, is like him who listens to a recitative, or trio, and goes his way, knowing nothing of the magnificent whole of the Music, its choruses, and its sublime *Hallelujah*, at the close. Happy are they who, year after year, enjoy this foretaste of the Music of Heaven. "The Messiah" is its Alpha and its Omega: it begins with "Hosanna to the Son of David," and ends with "the LORD our Righteousness." It sets forth

"Him first, Him last, Him midst and without end:"

and they who have lived in the enjoyment of its sweet harmonies, for any considerable portion of their days, are able to testify that, in the Church, is fulfilled the promise, "All Thy children shall be taught of the LORD, and great shall be the peace of Thy children." LAUS DEO. AMEN.

The Minor Festivals.

We call those Festivals minor ones, which are instituted with subordinate reference to the commemoration of holy men and women, and angels of God, although their great end and object is, like those of the great Feasts, the elucidation of the Gospel and the glory of the Holy Trinity.

The Minor Feasts are designed to give us an intimate acquaintance with the characters of Scripture; with the chosen friends and servants of the Lord Jesus; and so to make the Life of Christ Himself more clear and real to us. They are also designed to aid us in forming our own characters after the pattern of Christ. Heb. vi. 12; Phil. iii. 17.

When we consider how much of the Holy Scriptures is made up of narratives and biographies of the Saints, we cannot doubt that the wisdom of God has suggested the plan by which we review the histories of the Apostles of the Lamb; those great Saints, whose names are written on the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, and whose faith and godliness we are repeatedly bidden to follow. (1 Cor. iv. 16, xi. 1; 1 Thess.

i. 6; Heb. vi. 12.) In a word, for these commemorations, as they exist in the evangelical purity of our reformed ritual, we find authority enough in the precepts of CHRIST and of the Apostles themselves. Thus our LORD says of the woman who broke the precious box upon His head—"Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told *for a memorial of her.*" Also, it is said in the Apocalypse, "Him that overcometh will *I make a pillar in the Temple* of my GOD, . . . and I will write upon him the name of my GOD, and the name of the City of my GOD, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my GOD: and I will write upon him my new name." Who can doubt—when "such honour have all His saints"—that we derive benefit from the memorial of such examples of "suffering affliction, and of patience"? In the catalogue of ancient worthies, given us by St. Paul, in his Epistles, (Heb. xi. 1–40; Rom. xvi. 1–16,) we have an inspired Calendar of saints, whose glittering examples and precious names are made a lesson to all believers. Truly, "they shine as the firmament."

The movable feasts may often fall in concurrence with some one of the fixed festivals. Thus, Advent-Sunday may fall on St. Andrew's Day, and Easter on the Festival of the Annunciation. It is a good rule that a Sunday is always the superior day, because it is of Divine institution, and

also because it is, at the least, a minor Easter; but the Service for the inferior day may take precedence, nevertheless, (the Services being all alike Scriptural and equally of Ecclesiastical selection,) *whenever the Service for the inferior day harmonizes with the Season, and is the superior service in point of dignity and propriety.* But, among Ecclesiastical days, some are plainly superior to others; as, for example, Good Friday, though a fast, is superior to the Annunciation, though it be a feast. In all Concurrences, the inferior day may be so far observed that its Collect may be used with the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel of the other; a usage for which the Collect for the Annunciation would seem to have been prepared, as it is beautifully harmonized with Good Friday and Easter. Ritualists have given divers rules for these Concurrences; but, as much must be left to the discretion and taste of individual clergymen, it may be proper to say that the following arrangement is based on the simple principles above mentioned:—

1. *St. Andrew's day* may be also Advent Sunday, and then its Service must give way.

2. *St. Thomas' day* may be the Fourth Sunday in Advent, and its Service gives way.

3. *St. Stephen's day, St. John's day, the Holy Innocents', or the Circumcision,* may be also the First Sunday after Christmas, but the Service of the latter gives way, because it is not any more suitable to the Sunday, and adds less of Scriptural richness and variety to the Season.

4. *The Epiphany* may be the Second Sunday after Christmas, but the Service of the latter is inferior in point of dignity, and yields, for the reason given in the case preceding.

5. *The Conversion of St. Paul*, for like reasons, lends its Service to the Third Sunday after Epiphany: though not to Septuagesima and Sexagesima Sundays.

6. *The Purification* lends its Service to the Fourth Sunday after Epiphany; but not to Septuagesima, Sexagesima, or Quinquagesima Sundays, which belong to the Paschal Season, and cannot be deprived of their Services without injury to the unity and harmony of the System.

7. *St. Matthias' day* gives way to the Services of Sexagesima and Quinquagesima Sundays, Ash-Wednesday, and the First, Second, and Third Sundays in Lent, which prepare for the Paschal Season.

8. *The Annunciation* gives way to the Services for the last four Sundays in Lent, all the days of the Holy Week, and Easter-day, but may properly lend its Service to Monday or Tuesday in Easter-week, with which it is harmonized.

9. *St. Mark's day* gives way to the Service for Easter and its Octave, but not necessarily for those of the four following Sundays.

10. *St. Philip's and St. James' day* gives way to the Service for the Octave of Easter and for Ascension day, but may lend its Service to the four Sundays which follow the Octave of Easter.

11. *St. Barnabas' day* yields to Whit-Sunday and

Trinity Sunday, but lends its Service to the Monday or Tuesday in Whitsun-week, and also to the first three Sundays after Trinity.

12. *St. John Baptist's day* lends its Service to the First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays after Trinity.

13. *St. Peter's day* lends to the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Sundays after Trinity.

14. *St. James' day* lends to the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Sundays after Trinity.

15. *St. Bartholomew's day* lends to the Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Fourteenth Sundays after Trinity.

16. *St. Matthew's day* lends to the Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Sundays after Trinity.

17. *St. Michael's day* lends to the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth, Nineteenth, and Twentieth Sundays after Trinity.

18. *St. Luke's day* lends to the Eighteenth, Nineteenth, Twentieth, Twenty-First, and Twenty-Second Sundays after Trinity.

19. *All-Saints' day* lends to the Twentieth, Twenty-First, Twenty-Second, Twenty-Third, and Twenty-Fourth Sundays after Trinity.

20. *Thanksgiving day* lends, or borrows, *ad libitum*.

N.B.—In such cases, Lessons from Canonical Scripture may take precedence of those from the Apocrypha, where the former do not clash with other parts of the Service.

St. Andrew's Day.

As Advent Sunday is the Sunday which falls nearest to the Feast of St. Andrew, this day governs the season of Advent, and also leads the choir of minor feasts. For this, there is reason of congruity. The readiness of the true Israelites for the first Advent, furnishes an example to us who expect the second; and Andrew was the first called to be an Apostle, and the first to announce the Messiah, as such, to his brother, St. Peter, as we read in the Gospel of St. John. These holy brothers were among those who "feared the name of the LORD," according to the injunction of the prophet, in those days of waiting which supervened upon the closing of that line of great prophets, which began with Samuel and ended with Malachi. Hence, in them was fulfilled the promise of Malachi, "Unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise, with healing in His wings."

The Collect for the day, accordingly, embodies this idea of *readiness*, and of unworldliness in obedience. We pray for grace to imitate the Apostle, in prompt obedience to the admonitions of the Gospel and to the commandments of GOD'S Law. The Epistle sets forth the glory of the Gospel ministry, of which St. Andrew was an original dispenser, on the borders of the Black

Sea, near Sinope, and about the now famous region of the Crimea and Sebastopol. The Gospel is a brief history of his call into the apostolic ministry, after his original introduction to the SAVIOUR, as a disciple of John the Baptist. St. Andrew is said to have completed his work, as an Apostle, at Patræ in Achaia, where he was dreadfully scourged by the heathen magistrate, and then fixed to a cross of the figure of the letter X, which, in the Greek language, is the initial of the name of CHRIST.

The proper Lessons for the day are from the book of Proverbs, and contain instructions suited to any season, but not otherwise special to the feast. It appears to be the wisdom of the Church, to exercise her children, on these minor festivals, by lessons, from which they may select, for themselves, such particular counsels as the spirit of the day may adapt to the mind and heart, under the guidance of the HOLY GHOST.

St. Thomas' Day.

THIS Festival might seem appropriate to Eastertide rather than to Advent; but it must be recollected that there is an important connection between the Nativity of CHRIST and His resurrection, which is brought into view by the position of this Feast. For this truth, see Romans i. 3–4.

The Collect and Gospel explain each the other; and the Epistle connects with the Gospel in affirming JESUS CHRIST the Corner-stone: for He became such when He rose from the dead.

This day is the shortest day in the year, as St. John Baptist's Day is the longest, in our northern hemisphere. After the Baptist's day till now, the days are gradually shortened: after Christmas, they begin to lengthen. By this coincidence, old-fashioned people used to recollect that saying of the Baptist—"He must increase, but I must decrease."

St. Stephen's Day.

THE Church has ordered that, nearest to CHRIST, in her commemorations, should stand those who are most like unto Him, in "counting not their own lives dear unto them" for His sake, and for

the sake of souls for which He died. And so we have, immediately after Christmas, the three representatives of corresponding classes of witnesses for CHRIST—St. Stephen, the martyr in will and deed; St. John, the martyr in will, but not in deed; and the Little Innocents, martyrs in deed, though not in will. And it has been well observed, that thus the great sun of Christmas seems to linger in its light, after its going down; the red glare of the first martyrdom being succeeded by the softer radiance of St. John's long confessorship, and that, in turn, by the fainter glory of the suffering babes of Bethlehem.

In the Lesson from the Proverbs, observe the text, "The righteous are bold as a lion." In the Second Lesson we see an illustration of this truth in the speech of St. Stephen, which is an elaborate review of the history of the Jewish Church; showing that they never had recognised nor received the messengers of GOD—not even Moses himself—in the day of their visitation; and that in rejecting CHRIST, and fulfilling the LORD'S parable of the vineyard, they had been like unto their fathers. Their fathers had slain the servants, but they had slain the *heir* whom the FATHER had sent, saying, "They will reverence my Son." This great sermon of St. Stephen, which was the immediate cause of his martyrdom, is concluded in the Second Lesson for Evening Prayer; and the First Lesson, appropriate enough to the first of the noble army of Christian Martyrs, bewails

the oppressions done under the sun, because "on the side of their oppressors there was power."

As an Introit, the 83d Psalm would seem to be appropriate, as celebrating the deliverance of the Church from her enemies, which has been accomplished in all ages, by making the blood of the martyrs the seed of her increase. Thus, "the Synagogues of the Libertines, the Cyrenians and Alexandrians," may well be likened to "the tabernacles of the Edomites and Ishmaelites, the Moabites and Hagarenes." But the solemn and prophetic imprecations of the Law against the enemies of GOD, must be viewed as one side of an all-wise system; while it is the part of the Gospel to illustrate rather its other side, that of mercy to the chief of sinners. Our SAVIOUR prayed for His murderers, and St. Stephen was the first to follow His blessed example; and, for such as repent, there is mercy, as is proved by the case of Saul of Tarsus; while, for such as live and die in their iniquity, there is a dreadful retribution, which often begins even in this world. The fearful end of persecutors is the subject of an early Christian treatise by the elegant and classical Lactantius.

Concerning the Epistle, it is sufficient to say that it is the history of St. Stephen's martyrdom; short and simple, but sublime. Observe, his dying was but "falling asleep." The early Christian sepulchres were called *cemeteries* or *sleeping-places*, with such inspired warrant for the idea. The Gospel is our LORD's prediction

of the persecution of His messengers, and is a terrible denunciation of judgment against the city which killed the prophets. On this generation their fathers' sins were visited, because they filled up the measure of their fathers' sins; and this is the Law of GOD'S temporal judgments. Had they repented, CHRIST Himself assures us, He "would have gathered them as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings." Their blood was left on their own heads when JESUS added the words, "but ye would not."

St. John's Day.

THIS is the day of the Daniel of the New Covenant—the beloved disciple—the Son of Thunder—the Evangelist, the Divine, the Apostle; the writer of three inspired Epistles; the exile of Patmos; the centenarian patriarch of the Church; of him who outlived all the other Apostles; who lived into the second century of the Christian Church; who did for the Greek Churches what St. Paul did for the Latin; who saw the Apocalypse, and who, to all his other claims to our veneration, adds yet this, that he was the guardian and adopted Son of the Blessed Virgin, was chosen to this office by the LORD Himself, and named thereto by His dying words upon the Cross.

In him was realized the promise—"If ye drink

any deadly thing, it shall not hurt you," and he escaped the burning cauldron of the tyrant Domitian, unharmed by the fire. He was a martyr of a peculiar kind.

The Lessons from Ecclesiastes are not strikingly appropriate, but the Second Lessons are well chosen. They are the first and last chapters of the great work which St. John wrote as the prophet of the New Testament Canon. The Morning Lesson contains the narrative of his exile to Patmos, and the sublime account of his rapture on "the LORD'S Day," which is thought, by some critics, to be the annual rather than the weekly festival of CHRIST'S resurrection, or Easter-day. In either case, it is an important proof of the Christian Sabbath and of the festival system. The Evening Lesson is a refreshing foretaste of heaven, and contains the text appropriate to the Season of Christmas—"I am the root and the offspring of David, the Bright and the Morning Star."

The 92d Psalm, as the Introit, celebrates the triumph of the Apostle over his persecutors, and the fact that he lived to "bring forth more fruit in his age."

This Apostle says that he has no greater joy than to hear that his children "walk in truth." In the Collect we pray accordingly that this joy may be fulfilled in us. It is an eminently beautiful prayer. The Epistle is St. John's Christmas offering to his Master—a tribute to His Divinity, Incarnation, and

Atonement. The Gospel teaches us that there are many ways of glorifying GOD, in life and death; and that we must not curiously inquire as to our destinies, but simply follow providence in fidelity to obvious duty. GOD will order all to our good and to His own glory.

Innocents' Day.

THIS day was called *Childermas*, in old times, and is still the Church's Feast of Children. It is designed to remind us of the relations of little children to the kingdom of heaven; that CHRIST has accepted them as unconscious martyrs; and that, as *experience* in such as the aged St. John, and *strength* in such as the youthful St. Stephen, so a state of *baptismal innocence*, by remission of sin, is the glory of little children. (I. John ii. 12–13.) The Second Lesson at Evening Prayer continues the spirit of yesterday's feast in the testimony of St. John, but concludes with the words, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." But the First Morning Lesson, from Isaiah, is the grand key to the day's solemnity, as a direct prophecy of the Massacre of the Innocents by Herod; and also as a prediction of Infant Salvation— 'A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping," etc. "Thus saith the LORD, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the

LORD, and *they shall come again from the land of the enemy.*"

The Epistle takes up this promise, and shows the lovely army of infant martyrs as little lambs on Mount Sion, in the fold of Him who is at once the Lamb of GOD and the Shepherd of the Sheep. Observe, with reference to the Baptism of Infants, the simple characteristic of their salvation—"having His FATHER'S name written in their foreheads." In the death of Christian infants, this is the consoling thought—they have not known Him, but He has known them, and written His name upon them. They are redeemed, and their original sin is washed out, and they have committed no actual transgressions: "in their mouth is found no guile, and they are without fault before the throne of GOD."

The Gospel narrates the fulfilment of the prophecy, concerning Rachel: and the Collect is a pious aspiration after that spirit of little children, without which no soul can be accepted, according to the promises of CHRIST. It is important to the understanding of the nature of Redemption, that we should get the great idea, that "of such is the kingdom of Heaven." The ignorant question whether infants may be baptized is thus reversed; for we find that actual transgressors can only be entitled to baptism by "becoming as little children." In a word, CHRIST'S Atonement would include all that are born of women, and would restore all mankind, were it not for actual sin

Children, who do not sin, in act, are therefore healed by free grace; but others who have sinned against light and knowledge, must of necessity repent of their sins, before the same free grace can reach their souls.

Conversion of St. Paul.

Of other Saints we celebrate the Martyrdom; but for him who was *in deaths oft*, and who "died daily," we commemorate the event in which he first learned what great things he was to suffer for Christ's sake. This day is another Epiphany, well worthy to stand next that Feast in the Calendar—for it is the commemoration of Christ's Manifestation to the Great Doctor of the Gentiles, in order that by him He might be manifested to all the world. The Light that appeared to the Wise Men was made effectual when the same Light shone round Saul of Tarsus as he journeyed to Damascus. That Light was the Shekinah or incommunicable glory of God. Jesus appeared invested therein, to prove to His persecutor that He was the Messiah, and was risen from the dead. Not for his sake, but for ours! The door to the Gentiles was about to be opened by the baptism of Cornelius; a chosen vessel to bear the grace of God was needed. It pleased the Lord of Glory to furnish an Apostle, who should be himself a witness of His Resurrec-

tion and Godhead. All the evidence that an honest heart could desire, in an unexpected moment flashed upon him. This miracle was wrought to enlighten the whole world, but Saul's "obedience to the heavenly vision" was that of any convinced and humbled sinner. He might have disobeyed—but he repented. His regeneration followed as in other cases of true faith, in Holy Baptism, after prayer and fasting. The Gospel, therefore, was miraculously preached to him, and through him to all the world; but to say that his conversion was miraculous (if we mean thereby that he turned to God in any other wise than by his own free will, as other sinners do, under the influence of divine grace) is not true, and is contrary to his own account of the great event. (Acts xxvi. 19; Gal. i. 16.) We celebrate, this day, not so much the conversion of St. Paul, as the illumination of the World, by means of a miraculous Epiphany of CHRIST Himself; and while we enjoy the reflected light of this Epiphany, in the Epistles written, and the Churches planted, by St. Paul, we must not forget that much more was done for our souls than for his, in that dispensation of Providence to which we owe our knowledge of the Gospel.

But even if we regard this great event with the leaden eye of the cold and faithless rationalist, what abundant reason there is to remember it! The Conversion of St. Paul has left enduring consequences. In modern times a worldly great

man has been known to revolutionize all Europe, and by means of armies and navies, and swift beasts, to fly throughout the world, working the mightiest of changes. But all has died with him, and vanished "like a thin froth that is driven away with the storm." St. Paul, on the contrary, journeying as far and wide as he, (although on foot, "in perils of robbers," or in crazy vessels, "in perils of the sea,") with the simple sword of the Spirit, meets and conquers alike the boisterous mob of Ephesus, the rustics of inner Asia, the sages of Athens, the officers of Cæsar's household; if not, also, the savages of Britain. It is eighteen hundred years since; and all that he did remains. In three hundred years from the time when he bowed his head to Nero's sword, the work he left had survived the superstition of the Cæsars; and the odious Cross, in which he gloried, had supplanted the Roman Eagles. We have reason then to celebrate the event on which the world's destinies have hinged; especially as God has committed it to our devout admiration in no less than three several narratives.

The old Introit is the Psalm *Confitebor tibi*, or the 138th. It appears to have been chosen, like the Evening Lesson, from Wisdom, with reference to St. Paul's mission to the princes of the earth, who are called "gods" by the Psalmist. Yet in reference to his fasting and penitence, and his strengthening in the Holy Ghost, there is a propriety in applying to the Conversion of St. Paul

the verse, "When I called upon Thee, Thou heardest me, and enduedst my soul with much strength."

The Collect expresses the object of the commemoration: gratitude to GOD for the Conversion of St. Paul, as the gracious means of bringing us to the knowledge of the Truth. The Epistle repeats the history of the event; and the Holy Gospel is chosen in reference to one who sacrificed houses and lands, and wife and children, for CHRIST'S sake and the Gospel's. Yet its chief point seems to be in the words of CHRIST Himself, "But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first." Of the earliest Apostles, one betrayed the LORD, and another, who in many things was first, for a time fell away; but St. Paul, though "born out of due season," and last called, laboured "more abundantly than they all," and "was not a whit behind the chiefest of the Apostles."

The Daily Prayer is impressively commenced on this festival, by the sentences, "From the rising of the sun," and, "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness."

In the *Daily Prayer*, the First Lessons, though taken from the Apocryphal Scriptures, can scarcely have been appointed at random. In that for the morning, we must note the application of the passage, "This is He whom we had sometime in derision and a proverb of reproach: . . . how is he numbered among the children of GOD, and his lot is among the Saints.' Again, the comparison

we have drawn between St. Paul and a worldly conqueror is forcibly suggested by the passage beginning with, "The hope of the ungodly is like dust that is blown away with the wind." "But the righteous," it adds, "live for evermore: their reward also is with the LORD, and the care of them is with the Most High. Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom, and a beautiful crown from the LORD'S hand." One can scarcely read this without being reminded of St. Paul's assurance, that "there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the LORD should give him at that day." Again, we are reminded of St. Paul's panoply, (Eph. vi. 1,) in the passage, "He shall put on righteousness as a breastplate, and true judgment instead of a helmet. He shall take holiness for an invincible shield."

The Second Lesson in the Morning Prayer is one of the several accounts which the Apostle gives of the great occurrence we commemorate, and should be noticed for its touching allusion to St. Stephen, in answer to whose dying prayers, perhaps, St. Paul was given. Here is a lesson to faith! What a loss to the Church was the martyrdom of that young deacon! yet the harvest of his blood was an Apostle! That Apostle was the sower that went forth to sow in all the world: so that we may say, indeed, that the blood of the first martyr was the seed of the Church.

The Lesson from the Book of Wisdom in the Evening Prayer is the chapter, "Hear, therefore,

O ye kings;" in which all rulers are called upon to hearken unto Wisdom, which is a name of CHRIST. We must remember that such was the message of St. Paul to Felix and Festus and Agrippa, and Cæsar himself, and that he was declared, from the first, a chosen vessel to bear CHRIST'S name *before kings*. (Acts ix 15.) On the Second Lesson it is not necessary to make comment, for in it St. Paul is "permitted to speak for himself."

If a Selection of Psalms be desirable, instead of either of the portions for the 25th day of the month, the Fifth Selection will be found not inharmonious with the Lessons and Service of this Feast.

For an Anthem, take a composition from the Law and the Prophets:—"Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil;" "Wherefore they say, Is Saul also among the prophets?" "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness;" "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

The Purification.

TO-DAY our LORD is presented in the Temple, by the Blessed Virgin His Mother; and because she is too poor to offer, for the Lamb of GOD, the lamb

that was usual, she brings her turtle-doves, to bleed for the world's Redeemer. See Levit. xii. 2, 6, 8.

The adoration of St. Simeon and St. Anna, and the example of these holy persons, in their faith and patience and continued service and worship, are to-day commended to our imitation; while a leading event in the holy History of the Child JESUS is renewed in our hearts and minds. The Introit (Ps. 134) alludes to the watchings of St. Anna, and to her "departing not from the Temple;" as if the Psalm had been an invocation to her and St. Simeon, and an earnest of the time when "the LORD, that made heaven and earth," should bless them in Zion. "Ye that by night stand in the house of the LORD, . . . lift up your hands in the Sanctuary and praise the LORD." Compare with this the picture which the painter Evangelist has given, of the aged Saint, with the LORD in his arms, singing the swan-like *Nunc dimittis*.

The Epistle, from Malachi, suggests the fearful consequences that were to follow to the Levitical priesthood from their blindness to discern "the Angel of the Covenant," in whom the faithful delighted. The Daily Prayer should begin with the sentence, "*The Lord is in His Holy Temple.*" The First Morning Lesson is that wonderful prayer of the Book of Wisdom, in which the pride of human intellect is abased before the HOLY SPIRIT. It is a comment on the Collect, and teaches the way of purifying the mind. The Second Lesson

is the narrative of CHRIST's last visit to his Temple, which connects with the First, as may be learned from the prophecy read as the Epistle. The Evening Lesson from Wisdom is a sermon on GOD's ways of purifying His people, and even those of His enemies who are willing to learn by chastisements.

From the example of the Holy Virgin, all Christian mothers should learn to value and comply with the Churching-Office appointed by the Church: bringing an offering, however small, as directed by the rubric, after the pattern of the poor but blessed St. Mary with her turtle-doves.

As the Purification answers to the modern Churching of Women, the *Natalitia* of our LORD are considered as terminating to-day; and therefore it has been the immemorial custom, on this day, after service, to remove the Christmas-greens from the church. The Feast was formerly of much greater moment, in the devout esteem of Churchmen; and many of our older divines have excellent sermons "preached at Candelmasse."

St. Matthias' Day.

ALTHOUGH little is said of St. Matthias in the Holy Scriptures, his memory is fragrant in the Church, as that of the first in succession from the "handful of corn" which, when JESUS ascended,

was left alone "upon the top of the mountain," with the promise that "the fruit thereof should shake like Lebanon." The gates of hell had done their worst upon the little flock, and the twelve were reduced to eleven; but the LORD raised up Matthias, as a pledge to the Church that she should never be overcome. We pray in the Collect that GOD would raise up faithful and true pastors, and preserve us evermore from wolves in the clothing of the sheep.

The Epistle affords us the inspired interpretation of the 109th Psalm; to which the weak and irreverent so commonly object. St. Peter declares it to have been a prophecy of the treachery of Judas and of its awful retribution, as well as an inspired warrant for the election of Matthias; and when the Psalm is read in course, this solemn truth should always be borne in mind. How interesting, in this light, the Psalm becomes, as showing us more of the private character of the apostate than the Holy Gospel itself reveals! Then, too, the passage, "let another take his office," has a mysterious interest, from its remaining uninterpreted till the eventful moment when "the lot fell upon Matthias." Then it was made plain who that *other* was, of whom the SPIRIT wrote, so many ages before.

The Holy Gospel, which is the ancient one for this day, seems to refer to the wonderful fulfilment of prophecy, and the interpretation thereof, which the "wise and prudent" had never under-

stood, but which the SPIRIT had revealed to St Peter and the Apostles, in the events related in the Epistle. The scribes and lawyers, who boasted themselves "teachers of babes," could not have interpreted the passage from the Psalms which referred to Judas; but those poor peasants, albeit not yet fully endowed with the gifts of the HOLY GHOST, clearly explained, in the history of their own holy college, the things of which David had written.

The 140th Psalm, which is the Introit, is sufficiently appropriate to suggest its own commentary.

In the Lesson from Wisdom, there seems no faint applicability to Judas in the passage, which, by substituting the singular for the plural, reads as follows:—"For the destiny whereof *he* was worthy, drew *him* unto this end, and made him forget the things that had already happened," (the sop and the warnings of the SAVIOUR,) "that *he* might fulfil the punishment which was wanting to *his* torment, and that . . . *he* might find a strange death." So the concluding verses in the Lesson from Ecclesiasticus, appear not without applicability to the case of him who "came unto the LORD with a double heart."

Thus, Holy Scripture says much of the traitor Judas, and very little of the faithful Matthias. So, often, the Providence of GOD makes public much more of the delinquent than of the honest

Christian; but the Church's faith anticipates the day when the "secret ones" of CHRIST shall have praise of GOD.

The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

THIS festival celebrates the Mystery of the Incarnation; for to-day it is supposed that our Blessed LORD GOD and SAVIOUR was conceived in the womb of the Blessed Virgin.

The year of our LORD, until a century ago, was reckoned from the 25th of March; because, with the miraculous conception, the work of our redemption, and hence the era of grace, began.

The Second Selection of Psalms is peculiarly suitable to this day, as containing the direct prophecy of the event we celebrate:—"Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book were all my members written; which, day by day, were fashioned when as yet there was none of them."

The Morning Lesson is that chapter from the Apocrypha, beginning, "My son, if thou come to serve the LORD, prepare thy soul for temptation." The Evening Lessons contain an important warning with reference to the unfathomable subject of the day's commemoration—"Mysteries are revealed unto the meek; seek not out the things

that are too hard for thee: neither search the things that are above thy strength. But what is commanded thee, think thereupon with reverence, for it is not needful for thee to see, with thine eyes, the things that are in secret." The Collect, Epistle, and Gospel are sufficiently appropriate to furnish their own commentary.

It is a mysterious coincidence, that on the 25th of March began the Passion, as well as the Incarnation of the Redeemer; in allusion to which, St. Augustine, commenting in his quaint and simple way on the remarkable text, "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk," says, "The opinion of some is perhaps not absurd, who say this was commanded by the prophet, in order that the good Israelites should not unite with the wicked Jews, by whom CHRIST suffered, as it were, a *lamb in His mother's milk, that is, in the season of His conception.*"

The joyful tidings of a Redeemer's Incarnation come to us amid our Lenten sorrows and tears. So it was in her "low estate" that the Blessed Virgin was "highly favoured;" and we are reminded that the richest spiritual blessings wait on the state of penitence and self-abasement.

St. Mark's Day.

St. Mark was the kinsman, the disciple, and the minister of St. Peter, and his Gospel was always regarded as, in a sense, St. Peter's Gospel, for there can be little doubt that it was written under the Apostle's eye, and shares his authority and inspiration. Thus, when St. Peter says—"Moreover, I will endeavour that ye may be able, after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance," he is supposed to have reference to the composition of the Gospel, under the hand of St. Mark. Thus, St. Peter fulfilled the commission—"When thou art converted, *strengthen* thy brethren."

The Collect for the day fastens on this idea; our confirmation in the faith and establishment in it, enabling us to resist the seductions of heresy and schism. In a land where the artful Jesuit is insidiously at work, on one hand, and the pert rationalist is no less busy, poisoning the streams of knowledge, on the other, and where millions are literally blown about and carried away "with every wind of doctrine," how earnestly we should pray this prayer, and thank God for our unity with the Apostles in the pure and primitive faith which shall never be destroyed!

The Gospel shows us how essential to spiritual life is that grafting into Christ, which is made in

baptism, and maintained through faith, by the use of all the means of grace, with a penitent and lowly heart. The Epistle shows us what instrumentality CHRIST has ordained to this end; and that communion with CHRIST is maintained by communion with His Apostles, in the unity of the Church. The Apostolic ministry, it appears, is the gift of a risen and ascended LORD. CHRIST has given it "for the edifying of His body,"—the Church. Now, St. Paul contrasts with CHRIST'S, the ministers of men. Such are they whom strange sects, "having *itching* ears, heap to themselves" in these last days. (II. Tim. iv. 3.) In the Second Epistle of St. Peter, and in that of St. Jude, we have more to the same purpose.

The Lessons from Ecclesiasticus are full of Wisdom, and contain several texts in harmony with the spirit of the Collect. Note, in particular, in the Morning—"Strive for the truth unto death, and the LORD shall fight for thee;" and in the Evening—"Winnow not with *every wind*, and go not into every way." The Evening Lesson concludes with maxims which we find apparently quoted and condensed by St. James – "Be swift to hear, slow to speak slow to wrath."

Feast of SS. Philip and James.

Our blessed Lord recognised the power of sympathy and friendship, when He sent forth His disciples in pairs. So now the Church, by her double festivals, commemorates the unity of purpose and the bonds of love, in which the holy Apostles began and completed their glorious work. In like unity of spirit should the faithful still glorify their Master.

St. Philip and St. James are paired, in this festival, possibly in view of the promise made by our Saviour to St. Philip, touching the efficacy of prayer, and of the teachings of St. James as to the prayer of faith, which expounds and limits the apparently boundless pledge of the Saviour to give any thing asked in His name. St. James shows the need of faith and patience, in believing the promises, and yet bearing trials and disappointments.

The Epistle and Gospel harmonize with the Rogation Season, which falls near the time of this feast; while the exhibition of the Saviour, as "the Way, the Truth, and the Life," is equally harmonious with the entire spirit of the season between Easter and Pentecost. The text, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me," shows that a clear recognition of the Mediation of Christ is essential to prayer and to salvation.

Therefore, all our prayers, expressly or by implication, end with the formula—"through JESUS CHRIST our LORD." Observe, in the Epistle, the text—"A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways:" while the double feast is meant to show that two men, of the same mind, may be steadfast and successful in "the way of truth and life." This is brought out in the Collect, very happily. The Gospel exhibits the character of St. Philip, while the Epistle is from the invaluable treatise of St. James. In the Lessons from Ecclesiasticus, we are to note an apparent adaptation to St. James, as pre-eminently *Just*, for that was the surname given him, even by the Jews; while the institution of marriage is made so largely prominent, as to favour the idea that the fact of St. Philip's being a married Apostle has something to do with it. St. Clement of Alexandria relates that he gave his daughters in marriage; according to the precept in the Lesson—"Marry thy daughter, and so shalt thou have performed a weighty matter; but give her to a man of understanding." As a festival of Christian friendship, we find the fitting maxim—"Change not a friend for any good, by no means, neither a faithful brother for the gold of Ophir." In the Second Morning Lesson, the call of St. Philip is narrated; but the Second Evening Lesson falls into the daily calendar again.

St. James the Less, as he was called from his stature, (not from his character, certainly,) was

one of those three Apostles who seemed to St Paul to be the pillars of the Church, and whom he names before St. Peter and St. John, in giving them this distinction. He was, in many respects, "the very chiefest of the Apostles." He presided over the Mother Church of Jerusalem, and in its Apostolic Council; and he has left us a catholic, or general, Epistle, which supplies a key to the true exposition of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. He was, moreover, "the LORD's brother," being the son of Joseph, by a former marriage, or perhaps the son of Cleophas, and of the sister of the Blessed Virgin, for cousins-german were often called brethren among the Hebrews. The idea that he was the younger son of the Blessed Virgin has been broached by fantastic writers, but is sufficiently disproved by the fact that our SAVIOUR, on the Cross, provided for His Mother, by giving her to St. John. Surely, the lofty conception of the maternity of her who was "highly favoured" is much lowered by supposing that the SAVIOUR of the world was not her only son; and, as Scripture, unless distorted from its critical sense, favours no such idea, it is somewhat ignoble to urge it against the strong current of Ecclesiastical testimony and Scriptural probability.

St. Philip preached in Phrygia, and suffered martyrdom, being hanged to a pillar. St. James, like his Master, was tempted, on a pinnacle of the Temple; for there the rulers of the Jews called on him to deny his Master, whom he instantly

confessed as sitting on the right hand of the FATHER. On this, they dashed him down to the pavement, and a fuller, with one of his professional implements, a club or pole, struck him on the head, so that he died, like Zacharias the son of Barachias, "between the altar and the temple." It may be that St. Philip's pillar, and this instrument of St. James' martyrdom, had something to do with the old May-pole festivities, on this feast. One of the many good things we owe to the great and good Bishop Grosseteste, who held the See of Lincoln in the thirteenth century, was the suppression of the old heathenish *Floralia*, which so long profaned this day. We must not forget that the day is always observed at Oxford, by a sunrise hymn, in the open air, upon the tower of Magdalen. The singing-boys and others, in their surplices, ascend the tower, and there chant a thanksgiving for the food which CHRIST supplies to the body and to the soul of Man. At this solemnity, the writer had once the great pleasure of being present. The Introit celebrates the love of brethren, in the 133d Psalm, *Ecce, quam bonum;* and the American Church has an appropriate hymn written by one of her prelates:—

"Thou art the way; to Thee alone,
From sin and death, we flee."

St. Barnabas' Day

This festival falls near the time of Pentecost and it has been provided accordingly with services which strictly harmonize with those of that great anniversary. In the Epistle for the day, we are reminded that "he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost." In the Gospel, we have our Lord's own commentary on the Apostolic commission, which He had given to His servants, whom He vouchsafed to call His *friends*. He called and ordained them that "they should go and bring forth fruit, and that *their fruit should remain*." The work of the Apostles is indestructible; the Apostolic Church is never to be overcome by the world.

St. Barnabas, who is also called Joses, was added to the Apostolic company after our Lord's Ascension, and was at once an Apostle, and the first-fruits of Apostolic labour. He introduced St. Paul to the Church, and laboured a long time with that Apostle. He seems to have been of a majestic bearing, for the pagans would fain have worshipped him as the chief of their gods. As he was a Levite, the Apostolic succession was, in his person, grafted upon the Mosaic Priesthood, so that in him, and others, the line of Levi became perpetuated and identified with the Christian Ministry. It is surprising, if we closely follow

his history, how much more the infant Church was indebted to this remarkable man than to most of the original Apostles, so far as we can judge by the inspired records. The Apostles themselves named him "The Son of Consolation," and this surname, no doubt, is the chief reason for the appointment of his Feast in the season and near the great day of the Comforter. The Collect is a beautiful comment on his endowments, and on his fidelity in using all his talents for his Master's honour.

The Lessons from Ecclesiasticus contain many sayings that may be connected with the facts concerning Barnabas, which are related in the Second Lessons for Morning and Evening Prayer. He is said to have suffered martyrdom at Salamis, where he was beaten and stoned by the Jews, while preaching in their synagogue. The ancient "Epistle of Barnabas," though probably not his work, is a precious relic of antiquity, and should be read by all Christians, as a memorial of primitive piety.

St. John Baptist's Day.

Of the minor feasts, this is one of the greatest. It marks the exact half-year from Christmas, and reminds us that our Lord's forerunner was just six months older than Himself; at the same time, it waits on Christmas, as the Baptist did on

CHRIST, giving us much instruction and devotional material that bears directly on the Incarnation of the SON of GOD.

In the Southern Hemisphere it is the winter-feast, which renews to our devoted missionaries the recollections of the Northern Christmas they have left behind them. With us, 'tis the sweet feast of midsummer, of the longest twilight and shortest night, and of the fragrant hay-harvest. How appropriate, then, is the imagery of the Epistle!—"All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field."

The Epistle is well chosen, as containing a detailed and direct prophecy of the first advent and of the Messiah—of whom the Baptist was the precursor,—while it no less explicitly predicts the Baptist himself as "the voice of one crying in the wilderness." The Gospel is the history of his marvellous birth, and contains the hymn of his father Zacharias. In the Collect, we commemorate the Nativity of the Baptist, though, in all other cases, we celebrate the deaths of the Saints. For this, there are two reasons: he was sanctified from his mother's womb, (St. Luke i. 15,) in which he did homage to the Redeemer's presence before He was born; and again, the angel prophesied that "many shall rejoice at his birth." His birth was, in fact, a pledge of the better birth of Messiah the Prince, and this is the great reason why it is thus commemorated. But the language of the Collect may be said to epitomize the whole

history of this greatest of prophets, and to condense, in a very happy manner, the practical benefit to be derived from it by us.

The First Morning Lesson is Malachi's prophecy, "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me;" while the First Evening Lesson contains the same prophet's not less memorable prediction concerning him, "Behold, I will send you Elijah." The Second Lessons at Morning and Evening Prayer relate the history of St. John, in the fulfilment of these prophecies. It will be observed that he came out of the wilderness, not only "in the spirit and power of Elijah," but in the same wild raiment, identified, in every respect, with the former prophet, at least officially, so that it seemed as if the same Elijah, who never died, but went up in a chariot of fire to GOD, had again resumed his ministry on earth, as it were, at the point where it was so suddenly broken off. It is very important, as a help to the avoiding of bald literalities, to observe how the Old Testament promises were fulfilled in this respect. Elijah was promised, because a definite idea of the coming prophet was given by that name, whereas no idea at all would have been imparted had Malachi used the name of "John," in his oracles. So the Messiah is often promised in the Old Testament under the name of "David," because David was his type, as well as his ancestor.

St. John Baptist did not belong to the Christian

dispensation; nor was his baptism, strictly speaking, Christian baptism. It was only an introduction to the Gospel, as he himself shows, and as the practice of the Apostles to re-baptize his converts fully confirms. (Compare St. Mark i. 8, and Acts xix. 1–5.) He lived and died under Moses, and "the least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than he," because it is a greater thing to be the child of the Bridegroom and the Bride, than to be merely the Bridegroom's friend. (St. John iii. 29.) But he was the greatest born of women until JESUS; because, as the last of all the prophets, he was the immediate index and usher of Him of "whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write." He gave all prophecy its point and application, when he directed it to the SAVIOUR personally, saying, "Behold the Lamb of GOD;" and when he identified the Messiah, and manifested Him personally to Israel, at His baptism, after four thousand years of promise and of foreshadowings. When we reflect how great was the Baptist then, as compared with Moses and all the prophets, let us reflect on the testimony he gives to the Divinity of CHRIST, by saying of Him, "*He was before me*"—"whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose."

Let us consider, too, that the Last of the Prophets was the preceptor of St. Andrew and St. John, who were the first members of the Apostolic company, and that he himself transferred them to JESUS. (St. John i. 37,) so that in him

and them is fulfilled that which is said of the foundation of the Catholic Church, upon "*Prophets and Apostles*, JESUS CHRIST Himself being the Chief Corner-Stone."

The profound humility and fidelity of this great prophet are among the most conspicuous of his characteristics. He was but "a voice" to proclaim the LORD; and, fulfilling that office, he was ready to decrease. Yet what unmingled eulogy he receives from his Master! He was "a burning and a shining light." He was "more than a prophet." He was the greatest among those born of women. He seems to have lived and died almost without a fault.

St. Peter's Day.

ST. PETER was "the very chiefest of the Apostles," until St. Paul, who "was not a whit behind him," became, in fact, his superior, realizing our LORD's own intimation, addressed to St. Peter, that there were "last, who should be first." His Apostleship was limited to the Jewish Church, while St. Paul's, although it was almost one of universal jurisdiction, was the Apostleship of the Nations. The seat of St. Peter's jurisdiction was Antioch; but he was probably a prisoner and a martyr at Rome, where he seems to have suffered, with St. Paul, under Nero. He was crucified, and

that (at his own request) with his head downward; for he felt himself unworthy to suffer in the same manner as his Master had suffered.

But St. Peter had some personal distinctions which were all his own. To him CHRIST gave the name of Cephas; and to him, as the foremost Apostle, were first promised the keys of the kingdom, in token that he should admit the first Jews to the Church, and also the first Gentiles; thus laying the first lively stones upon the Rock, CHRIST JESUS, and beginning the holy fabric of the Apostolic Church. It must always be borne in mind that CHRIST is the Rock, and St. Peter only a Stone, according to Scripture; and that He Himself shows us how all believers may acquire the name of *Cephas*, by becoming built on that Living Stone, the true Messiah. (I. Peter ii. 4.) Among the Apostles, St. Peter was undoubtedly the symbol of the Church's Unity, even as the other Apostles were of its Universality; but the limits of his dignity and precedence among the Apostles have been already spoken of in connection with the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity. His primacy was personal, and could not be entailed, and it had nothing in it of a supremacy or "lordship over GOD'S heritage."

In the Lessons from Ecclesiasticus, note two texts specially applicable to St. Peter's fall, when he denied the LORD—"Say not thou, It is through the LORD I fell away;" and again, "There is one that slippeth in his speech, but not from his

heart." The Second Lessons are narratives of the Apostle's miracles, and of his preaching, and of their fruitful results.

In the Collect there is a beautiful allusion to the pre-eminent apostleship of St. Peter, as he is made the model of all worthy bishops and pastors who have succeeded him. The phraseology of this Collect is in part borrowed from St. Peter's own language, in one of his Epistles, while it is based on that touching incident in his history, when, as he had thrice denied the LORD, he was made to profess Him thrice, and as often was reinstated in His ministry, by the words—"Feed my Lambs, Feed my Sheep." In the Epistle, we have the history of St. Peter's imprisonment under Herod, and of his deliverance by the angel; while the Gospel is that sublime passage in which he who was formerly called Simon, received the name of Peter, in reward for that bold confession in which he recognised JESUS, as the Rock of Ages.

A proper Introit for this day, is Psalm 18th, "I will love thee, O LORD my strength; the LORD is my stony Rock, and my defence, my SAVIOUR, my GOD, and my might." The 116th Psalm, which was the old Introit, seems to have reference to his fall, and to his rising again to "strengthen his brethren."

St. James' Day.

THE Apostle called St. James the Great was the brother of St. John, and shared with him the name—"a Son of Thunder." He was a Son of Zebedee, and drank, first of all the Apostles, of his Master's cup of martyrdom, as his brother drank it latest. Putting the narratives of the Epistle and the Gospel together, we see this fact in a strong light; and it is a little striking that, whereas he is surnamed "the Great," the strife to be *greatest* should be one of the most memorable events in his history. Note the text, "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister."

In the Collect, his prompt obedience, and sacrifice of worldly interests and affections, are made our example. He was admitted with Peter and John to the most sacred privacies of the LORD JESUS; and the cheerfulness with which he suffered death is said to have converted his accuser, who, breaking out into a confession of CHRIST, was beheaded with the same sword.

St. Bartholomew's Day.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW is commonly supposed to be Nathanael, the companion of Philip and "the

Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile." He is said to have preached in Persia, and, when he came to suffer for his testimony, to have been flayed alive.

The Collect is a commemoration of the sincerity and purity of the Apostle's preaching and example. The Epistle seems to be a supplement to the feast of St. Peter, and the Gospel to that of St. James: so that the two last festivals lend their spirit to this. The unity and equality of the Apostolic college are signified in both; for what is said of one, is said of all: "by the hands of the Apostles were many signs and wonders wrought." And in their company, no one was greatest: CHRIST had ordained—"it shall not be so with you." Together they laboured and suffered, and together "they shall sit on thrones."

Observe the exceeding beauty of the First Morning Lesson from Ecclesiasticus. The light of the Gospel is predicted in the words, "I will yet pour out doctrine as prophecy, and leave it to all ages, forever."

It is melancholy that the festival of this guileless Apostle is forever associated with the treachery and malice of the Massacre in France in the year 1572. Oh for the day of a restored unity, when all Christians shall be like their Master, "in whose mouth there was found no guile!"

St. Matthew's Day.

ST. MATTHEW, or Levi, is to be thought of, not only as a rich man, but, as one of a class which the Jews esteemed to be hopelessly depraved. In his conversion, there is a signal instance of grace overcoming the deceitfulness of riches, and also the enslaving effect of an unhappy position and reputation. The publican was supposed to be what a heartless usurer is, and he was even more detested, because he was an instrument of foreign tyranny. He paid the Roman government a certain sum, and was permitted to collect it, with excessive increase, from a certain district of his native land. Levi was actually engaged in this business, and seated at the receipt of custom, when CHRIST called him to be an Apostle. Who knows but he was the identical publican who is elsewhere contrasted with a certain Pharisee? He had repented of his sins, and was performing his duties equitably and mercifully. JESUS bade him leave this pursuit, and the accumulation of wealth, and become a follower of Him, in poverty and death. What an example—when, at the word, he arose and left all, and followed JESUS! Our LORD'S accepting a banquet in his house, and sitting down to eat with publicans and sinners, is a proof of the worldly comfort which St. Matthew gave up to become an Apostle: and, at the same time, it furnished a

rebuke to the Pharisees, who were thus taught that CHRIST came to call sinners to repentance. As a commentary on this Gospel, we have the Epistle, in which Mammon, or the god of this world, is shown to be the agent of spiritual blindness, in the unbelieving. We cannot serve GOD and Mammon; and they who are blinded by the glare of gold, cannot see the light of the glorious Gospel. The Collect is a prayer for deliverance from this awful condition of blindness, and hardness of heart.

The Morning Lesson from Ecclesiasticus contains the appropriate text, "Give unto the Most High according as He hath enriched thee." One is tempted to suppose the Evening Lesson has been shifted from its place, as its words about a physician would make a more fitting Lesson for St. Luke's day, while the Lesson from Job, the wealthy man of Uz, appointed for that feast, would seem better here than there. But let us not be ungrateful for the opportunity of reading here, or anywhere, such an extraordinary account of "all sorts and conditions of men"—of the varieties of ancient society, and of the wisdom of GOD in ordaining to every man his place.

St. Matthew is the Evangelist to whom, under GOD, its great Inspirer and Giver, we owe the first Gospel. He is said to have suffered martyrdom among the Parthians. It is usual to represent him with an Angel near at hand—as St. Mark is pictured with the Lion, St. Luke with the Bullock,

and St. John with the Eagle. These emblems signify the characteristic feature of each Gospel. the Angel with "man's face" betokening the exhibition of our LORD's humanity, which angels desired to look into; the Lion, his royalty; the Ox, his patience, and preparation for sacrifice, and hence his Priesthood; while the Eagle signifies his Divinity, with the assertion of which St. John begins his Gospel, as an eagle flies up to the sun and fixes his eye upon the brightness of its glory. The emblems are fancifully borrowed from the heavenly creatures of the Apocalypse, (Rev. iv. 7; also Ezek. i. 10,) called *beasts* in our version, but more properly *Living-ones*, or, from the Greek, the Zoä.

Michaelmas.

THE feast of St. Michael and All Angels is designed to keep before our minds the relations of Angels to the Church of CHRIST, as being concerned, as well as ourselves, in the SAVIOUR's Mission; as being, with us, members of His mystical body; as being guardians of our souls, and ministers to our bodies, in life and in the hour of death. All this, and much besides, that is affirmed of Angels, we should devoutly consider and bring to mind on this day. Michael is called a Saint,

just as Gabriel is called a *Man*, (Daniel ix. 21,) to assure us of the great truth that—

> "Angels and living Saints, and dead,
> But one Communion make."

In the Prophet Daniel, moreover, (iv. 13, 17,) the name of Saints, or *holy ones*, is especially given to the Angels.

The Epistle is the vision of St. Michael contending with the Devil, as related by St. John. "They that be with us, are more than they that be with them," said Elisha, (II. Kings vi. 16,) a fact which should animate us always to "resist the devil," knowing that, if we do so, "he will flee from us." The Gospel asserts that little children have the highest Angels for their heavenly sponsors: as we elsewhere learn, that every repenting sinner gives joy to some of the heavenly host. The Collect teaches us to address prayer and praise to God only, for the services of Angels, thus strictly observing the precept, and avoiding the danger, pointed out in St. Paul's Epistle (ii. 18) to the Colossians.

The First Lesson not only contains the story of Jacob wrestling with "the Angel of the Covenant," who is the Word of God, but begins with the fact that a host of God's Angels encountered him, at a certain place, possibly to recall to mind his youthful vision at Bethel. The Second Lesson is the history of a signal service rendered by an Angel to

the infant Church, in Jerusalem. In the First Evening Lesson we are warranted in the belief that St. Michael was the guardian angel of the Jewish Church and nation, and that fallen Angels withstood him, in behalf of heathen nations. The Second Evening Lesson tells us more about these fallen ones, and their final doom; while it tells us of some mysterious contest between Michael and the apostate Lucifer about "the body of Moses," which some think a form of speech for the Jewish Church, while others consider it a literal reference to something which occurred at the unknown burial-place of the great prophet, (Deut. xxxiv. 6,) who was probably buried by the ministry of Angels. God hid him to prevent idolatry, but Satan would have had his dead body exhibited and worshipped, say some, and hence the conflict between the arch-angel and the arch-apostate. Let us never forget, while we bless God for the "elect angels"—those who kept their first estate—that we have renounced the devil and all his works, and that he goeth about seeking to destroy us. It is all important that the personality and power of Satan should be kept before us, so long as we are in the body, in order that we may maintain our fight against him, and conquer him, after the example of Christ.

St. Luke's Day.

To-day we celebrate the holy memory and example of the sublime Evangelist who was the companion and fellow-labourer of St. Paul, and who, after enriching the Church with his Gospel, proceeded to set forth the Acts of the Apostles, the Gospel of the Holy Ghost. He is the earliest historian of the Church, and the only one in whose narrative there is no errour, nor any colouring of human prejudice, or partiality. He was originally a physician; and although it is supposed that he was a freedman, and therefore originally a slave, it cannot be doubted that he was a man of education, and of highly-refined intelligence. All his gifts he nobly devoted to the service of Christ, and finally, at an advanced age, he suffered martyrdom in Greece, being hanged upon an olive-tree. Those who pretend that he was a painter give an important truth the clothing of fable; for he is the most pictorial of the Evangelists, and by his use of words he makes cartoons of the story of the Messiah.

In the Collect we have a curious and unique specimen of ingenuity, in the adaptation of spiritual significance to historical fact. Luke, the physician, is seen in the work of the Gospel, as a dispenser of remedies to the souls of men; not so much abandoning his occupation, as turning his

skill to the higher part of human nature. We pray, therefore, that we may be healed by the medicines of the truth he has delivered.

The Epistle furnishes evidence of the fidelity of St. Luke at a critical period in the life and labours of St. Paul when he was deserted by friends and greatly persecuted by enemies. The Gospel is a specimen of the Evangelist's own pages, and is chosen as a hint that he was, originally, one of the seventy disciples.

The sublime prayer of the Son of Sirach is read as a Morning Lesson, to-day, teaching us that wisdom is the true medicine of the spiritual part; and the Lesson from Job may teach us that the diseases of our bodies, as well as the sins of our souls, are the results of the malice of Satan.

Feast of SS. Simon and Jude.

THE unity of the Church is the subject presented in the Collect, to-day, as founded in the Apostolic doctrine and fellowship.

The Epistle from St. Jude sets forth the sin of schism, and the duty of "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." In the Gospel, our SAVIOUR promises the Spirit of Truth to the Church, and identifies the testimony of the Apostles with the testimony of the Spirit; while He foretells that it shall be hated and opposed,

and that its friends must suffer for the Truth's sake. In the fraternity of two Apostles in the same feast, the entire concord of the primitive faithful is symbolized; an example of unity being made the basis of our prayers for the same.

The Lessons are from Job, and do not seem specially appropriate. Of St. Simon we know very little: he was surnamed Zelotes, and also the Canaanite; and some have imagined that he was the bridegroom at the Marriage in Cana. St. Jude is much more prominent as an Apostle: he is named Thaddæus, and Lebbæus, and is once distinguished from the traitor by the suffix, "not Iscariot." We may, perhaps, safely suppose him the brother of Simon the Canaanite, (St. Matt. xiii. 55,) and also of St. James the Less. He was "the LORD's brother," therefore, as St. James was, and as has been explained in speaking of that Apostle. His bold and spirited Epistle gives us an idea of his character, as does also his question, at the Last Supper, "LORD, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?"

During the persecution which raged under the tyrant Domitian, two young men were accused before him, as of the seed royal of David, and relatives of the LORD JESUS, who were specially obnoxious as likely to aspire to empire on that account, and to be favoured by the Christians. They were accordingly closely interrogated by the tyrant, when it appeared that they laboured

with their own hands as small farmers, and looked only to reign with CHRIST, in the life of the world to come. On this, they were contemptuously dismissed, and the persecution ceased; and these good men lived till the time of Trajan, apparently as pastors, if not bishops, of the Church. They were the grandchildren of St. Jude, and the last of our LORD's kindred, according to the flesh, of whom history makes mention.

Thanksgiving Day.

DAYS of thanksgiving, specially appointed for signal deliverances, were common in England during the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First; but the origin of a Thanksgiving Day, of annual appointment, to praise GOD for the fruits of the earth, is attributed to the early colonists of New England. They deserve all praise for it; although we need not question that the idea was borrowed from the Thanksgiving Days to which they had been accustomed in the bosom of their Mother Church; for even their leader was willing to testify "that he had one and the same faith, hope, spirit, and baptism which he had in the Church of England, and none other."

What was a partial and local thing, however, our Church, finding it in keeping with her own system, and a sort of complement to the Rogation

Fasts, did not hesitate to take up and make *national*—appointing the First Thursday in November as the day of annual rejoicing before the LORD for the ingatherings of harvest, and "for all the other blessings of His merciful providence." The day is made mutable, however, in deference to the civil authority, in case any other day is appointed.

The sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving which has been appointed for this Festival is worthy of its purpose. It is a giving of thanks, from first to last: and if it could but be universally adopted and used by the Christians of America on a set day every year, it would make the Feast one of the noblest National observances that can be imagined. For the lack of such a service, the day has degenerated among its hereditary friends, in many parts of the country, and is often kept as a day of political harangues, with gluttony and excess.

The Sentences which precede the ordinary ones, at Morning Prayer, are very striking, particularly the opening Sentence, "Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase," etc. The *Invitatory*, which takes the place of the *Venite*, is also well selected; and, on a bright autumnal morning, sunny with spirit in the great congregation, it is very inspiring, especially in its close:—"He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat." It is a Song of Harvest-Home.

The Tenth Selection ordinarily is then said the 150th Psalm, with which it concludes, being sung

with fine effect as a Doxology, with the Gloria. But the minister is at liberty to make his own selection of Psalms, and often does it with good effect, to celebrate particular or local blessings. The 107th Psalm is always appropriate; and the *Non Nobis Domine* has been appointed for such occasions from very ancient times, as the great poet records of the days of Henry V., into whose mouth he puts the language—

> "Do we all holy rites;
> Let there be sung *Non Nobis* and *Te Deum*."

The First Lesson is very applicable to us, as the descendants of a modern colony, like that of Israel in Canaan in many temporal respects. The Second Lesson is chosen chiefly for the words, "in every thing *give thanks*." The Special Thanksgiving is chaste in language and simple in construction, and so is the beautiful Collect for the day. The Epistle and Gospel are admirably selected, with reference, evidently, to the inculcating of works of mercy as the kind of thanksgiving which GOD prefers to mere words of praise. In the former, note that the early Christians are called "a kind of first-fruits," which is language that looks to a great harvest of faithful men at the last. In the Gospel, how sublime is the epitome of GOD'S bounties to us, given in the words of CHRIST, "He maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just, and on the unjust."

The Feast of All Saints.

THE Greeks instituted this Festival ages before it was observed in the West, and it was kept on the Octave of Pentecost—our Trinity Sunday. It was not observed among the Latins till the seventh century, when the Pantheon was turned into a church, and dedicated by this name. It was then made to fall on the first of November

The American Indians observed that what is called the "Indian Summer" falls at this season, and they called it the "Summer of All Saints." It is a peculiarity of our climate which is very much in keeping with the tender associations of this day.

The remarks with which these Minor Festivals have been prefaced in this book may serve to illustrate its beautiful Collect. All Saints!—what a glorious idea! The General Assembly and Church of the First-Born, whose names are written in heaven, and every spirit of just men made perfect, since Abel worshipped or St. Stephen fell asleep! Jewels in the crown of JESUS! Lights of the world, and the salt of the earth! Young men and maidens, matrons and little children, gray-haired sires and mothers in Israel! Oh, what images are called up by the very name of this feast—which is "a pleasant odour like the best myrrh as galbanum, and onyx, and sweet

storax, and as the fume of frankincense in the Tabernacle." Nay, it is as the sound of the Bridegroom's coming, and in a moment we may see the bright procession marshalled, and crowding to the skies. There go the wise virgins, lamp in hand, and loins girded, their lights trimmed and burning; there are the martyrs, palm-branch in the right hand, and in the left knife, and sword, and wheel, and saw, and faggot—the emblems of their sufferings; Apostles, with their keys, and a long line of bishops, each with his pastoral staff. Then comes the bright band of cross-bearers—the faithful, the redeemed. Oh, their crowns, their harps, their amaranthine chaplets, their vials full of odours! Say, my soul, shalt thou be with these when the cry goes forth at midnight, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!"

All the Saints who are uncalendared are commemorated, to-day, with those who, in every Christian country, are of local memory and renown. To-day, we remember departed friends who are asleep in JESUS. 'Tis a day to visit graves and burial-places, and to fling wreaths of remembrance upon the spot that holds beloved dust. So mourn we—not as without hope. Hence, we keep the feast at Church; and some pastors read the names of all parishioners who have died, during the year, in full communion with the Church; and then, in the prayer for the Church Militant, we give thanks "for all CHRIST's servants departed this life in His faith and fear." The Gospel for

the day suggests that every true Christian has some characteristic of piety which unites him with a class—one is meek, and another is merciful. All are, in some degree, what others are, but each leaves an example of some special grace; all are "entire," as re-producing every feature of CHRIST, in element, but each one is Christ-like in some particular, in which he has exercised himself especially. The Beatitudes supply us with much food for reflection in this also, that they furnish such a contrast to the characteristics of the world's heroes. The world "calls the proud happy;" CHRIST blesses the "poor in spirit." The Epistle teaches us that CHRIST knows all His faithful ones; and that, whether Jews or Gentiles, all have been marked as His own, and shall be gathered from every kingdom and nation, at the fitting time, to live forever in His presence. The last Prayers in the Burial Service are singularly suited to the close of services after sermon; and the Introit should be Psalm 149.

The Lessons from the Apocrypha, this day, are full of sublimity and appropriateness; they may be regarded as noble proofs of the hopes and aspirations, coincident with ours, with which even the Old Testament Scriptures animated the Jewish faithful, before CHRIST came. They are, therefore, in effect, canonical Scripture, in the shape of ancient hymns; reflections from the mind of the "Church of the first-born." We see in them a full testimony to the peace of departed Chris-

tian souls, in the intermediate place, and also to the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. The Second Morning Lesson is an Inspired Calendar, and a glorious epitome of the olden dispensations; while the Second Evening Lesson is a sublime Hallelujah chorus, and a prelude to the Song of our Salvation. At the close of the All Saints feast, while——

"Fades o'er the moor the brief November day,"

let us meditate on the impressive fact that this Festival grows richer every year, with fresh harvestings to the garner of GOD. Thousands swell the Song of Victory this year, who last year were groaning with us under the burden and heat of the day. Soon our time must come. Oh, in that hour of death, and in the day of Judgment, by Thy cross and passion, good LORD, deliver us! AMEN.

THE END.